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STUDY GUIDE
FOR MONTANA SCHOOLS

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A TELEVISION HISTORY

STUDY GUIDE FOR MONTANA SCHOOLS

Written by Jeffrey J. Smith

Produced by
Montanans for Quality Television

Published by the
Montana Office of Public Instruction

1985

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ORDERING THE TELECOURSE

K. Ross Toole's Montana, a 20-lecture telecourse on videocassettes, may be purchased from:

MQTV
PO Box 8355
Missoula, MT 59807
(406) 543-6333

School districts may rent the telecourse from the Office of Public Instruction. For information on rental fees or ordering, contact your school film coordinator or:

Audiovisual Library
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This study guide accompanies telecourse rentals.

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Lorissa Clark, *Typesetting*

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FOREWORD

In the spring of 1981, Montanans for Quality Television (MQTV) was privileged to videotape K. Ross Toole's last lectures at the University of Montana in Missoula, which comprised his class, "Montana and the West." These lectures were then edited into 20 half-hour segments and illustrated with archival material, live video, maps, and graphs.

Jeffrey J. Smith, a Missoula writer, researched and wrote this companion study guide, which was published by the Montana Office of Public Instruction.

K. Ross Toole was for many years one of the University of Montana's most impassioned and dedicated historians. While his interpretation of history is uniquely his own, his love of the land known as Montana belongs to all of us. By introducing Dr. Toole to Montana television, each of us has an opportunity to sift through the past and analyze it in order to make decisions for the future – our future.

Many Montanans worked hard to bring this telecourse to you. We worked together to further the idea of public programming, the idea that Montana has valuable people and significant issues that deserve to be seen and heard. Television allows us to reflect our values, our ideas, and our life styles back to ourselves and our communities. We would like to see more of this type of programming about Montana and, after you have used this telecourse, we hope you will, too.

Mary Canty for MQTV
Jeffrey J. Smith

DEDICATION

For Dan Twohig, 1951-1985

Like me, he was one of a new breed of immigrants to Montana. He understood K. Ross Toole implicitly, and he acted accordingly.

J.J. Smith
October 1985

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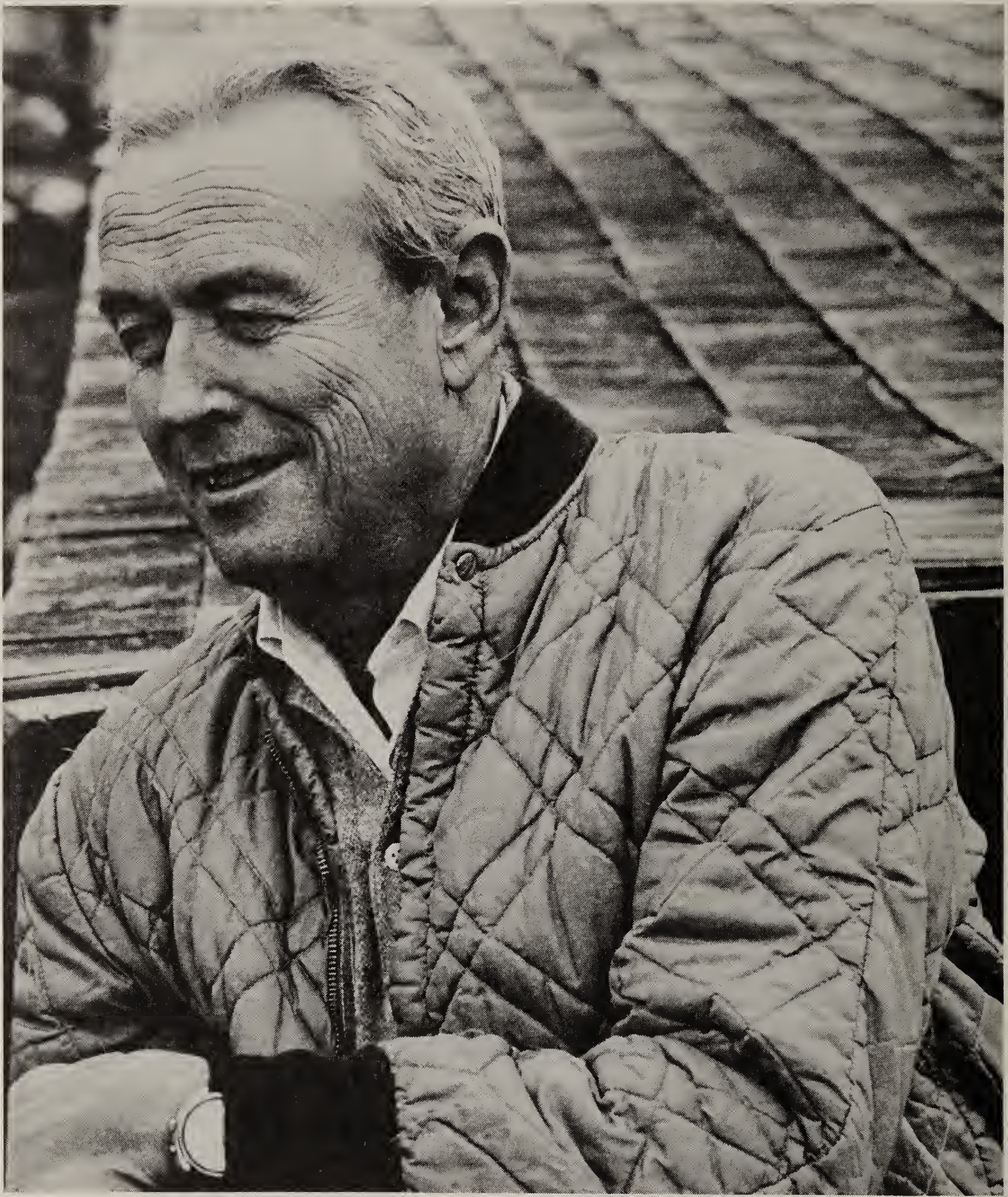

Howard Skaggs, University of Montana

Kenneth Ross Toole, 1920-1981

WINDS OF MONTANA

There are, I think undeniably, new winds sweeping across America. They are indeed gusty and changeable. But they are new, and they will alter what happens in Montana, and whether for better or worse does depend on Montanans and how they or you read those winds. Because we can control, albeit with great difficulty, what we become. Because it is a very new idea to most Americans that growth and good are not necessarily symbiotically intertwined. We are beginning to realize that some kinds of growth are good, but that others are very bad indeed. That is a new idea in this country.

SAY "MONTANA" TO ANY urban American or a Japanese or a European, and you are likely to hear these descriptions: "rural"..."Rocky Mountains"..."vacations"..."National Parks"..."beautiful."

You won't hear that Montana has been an important contributor to the global economy since the early 1880s. You won't hear that its furs, gold, silver, copper, cows, wheat, timber, and coal have fit right into the supply and demand of the entire planet. And you won't hear that Montana developed very differently from any of its neighbors. It is true that most of Montana's workers arrived here to work jobs in heavy industries, not to work the land as farmers and ranchers.

Lewis and Clark pushed into Montana in 1805 because the American president, Thomas Jefferson, wanted to out-race the British and the French. Montana's furs went directly to Europe where they became the "high hats" of nobility. Montana's precious metals fit into the price structure of the world's financial centers. Within 10 years of the "copper kings' " arrival in Butte, a Parisian was manipulating the price of the state's copper. Our timber, which went to fire mammoth heap smelters and reinforce the mine shafts down almost a mile beneath the city of Butte, depended on the profitability of copper in the world market. Englishmen were the first investors in Montana-raised cattle. And now our coal sells only if it is competitive with oil imported from Saudi Arabia, Mexico, and Nigeria.

Historians are explorers who travel the intricacies of the past. They seek the adventures of insight, the treasures of knowledge, the valuable abstractions of who we were and why we have become who we are today. Their tools are their research, their transportation a lively and insightful intelligence, their skills only as good as their persistence in uncovering the right documents and asking the right questions.

And the best historians, Montana's K. Ross Toole among them, are teachers as well. Professor Toole was never content just to know the past. He was driven to communicate the past to young people. He was as concerned about the future of the state of Montana. Dr. Toole was the link that held hands both with the Montanans of the past and the Montanans of the future.

K. Ross Toole taught his most popular course, "Montana and the West," for 16 years. His strong lectures, plus eight books, frequent contributions to historical journals, and active participation in Montana's legislative sessions made his voice a powerful one. Through the efforts of a handful of people who believed in the *K. Ross Toole's Montana* project, another generation of Montanans can now hear Dr. Toole's voice.

TO THE TEACHER

THE TELECOURSE

K. Ross Toole's Montana is a 20-lecture telecourse. Each lecture runs one half-hour. While teachers will know best how to incorporate the telecourse into their curricula, a few suggestions might help.

This is a survey course and is not meant as a curriculum in itself. Any reader of Montana history can point out the gaps in Dr. Toole's coverage. But Toole has made conscious decisions about what he thought Montana students should know.

Although some may want to select isolated lectures in the series, the course is most effective when taken as a whole. That does not mean, however, that *K. Ross Toole's Montana* should be shown daily or at the exclusion of other valuable classroom resources. This course can be a building block, a supplement that will work effectively when regularly scheduled, say, once a week.

"Winds of Montana" begins the series. Dr. Toole's viewers gain immediate insight into his style and point of view. The historian discusses where Montana history leads, the changes he sees in American character, and the potential impacts of these changes in Montana. Dr. Toole will repeat this lecture at the end of the course. It is, therefore, both his introduction and his conclusion.

The next lecture, Lecture 2, is the general orientation to the course. Dr. Toole discusses Montana's geography, its natural resource history, and some of the course's themes.

Lectures 3 through 6 concern Montana's prehistory, its early history, the journey of Lewis and Clark, and native American history up through Chief Joseph's flight.

The discovery of gold and its impacts are the subjects of Lecture 7. Included is a discussion of the vigilantes of Bannack and Virginia City. Lecture 8 concerns early Montana Territory government.

In Lectures 9 through 13, Dr. Toole discusses the establishment of Butte, the personalities of the "copper kings," the economics of copper, and the encroaching monopoly of the Standard Oil Company.

Lecture 14 is about Montana's cattle industry, while Lectures 15 and 16 concern the homesteading, or "honyocker" period, roughly 1909 to 1925.

Lectures 17 and 18 are a departure from the thus far chronological approach to Montana history. Both lectures concern the history of air pollution in Butte and the Deer Lodge Valley.

Lecture 19 is about contemporary development of Montana's coal and water resources.

The series concludes with Lecture 20, a repetition of Dr. Toole's "Winds of Montana" lecture.

USING THE STUDY GUIDE

This study guide gives high school teachers and students an overview of each lecture, as well as a description of each lesson's *Learning Objectives* and *Background Notes.* In addition, the guide provides learning assignments *Before Viewing, While Viewing,* and *After Viewing.* Reading assignments from Toole's writings are given, and each section has an extensive *Bibliography.* Quoted material is from Toole's lectures and writings.

SELECTED READINGS

Students and teachers using the telecourse will benefit from the following books by K. Ross Toole:

Montana: An Uncommon Land, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1959.

The Rape of the Great Plains, Boston: Atlantic Little-Brown, 1976.

Twentieth-Century Montana: A State of Extremes, Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1972.

With Merrill G. Burlingame. *A History of Montana,* 3 volumes, New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1957.

Other readings of importance to the telecourse are:

Myers, Rex C. and Harry Fritz, eds. *Montana and the West,* Boulder: Pruett, 1984.

A collection of essays by K. Ross Toole's students and colleagues, including a portrait of Toole and a list of his published works.

Malone, Michael P. and Richard B. Roeder. *Montana, A History of Two Centuries,* Seattle: University of Washington, 1976.

A WELCOME

Welcome to *K. Ross Toole's Montana*, a television history course.

Montana's past, its present, and its future are distinct unto themselves. This is an unusual time, a time of transition. We are moving from a highly industrial past to an emerging, uncertain future. Our time is a hard time, a time of choice, a time to understand, as K. Ross Toole tells us, which way the winds of Montana are tending.

Here lies Dr. Toole's contribution to our understanding of ourselves. We can repeat the patterns of the past, develop our rich natural resources quickly, and sacrifice the state's aesthetic values. Or, we can forge new patterns, a new future.

We must confront these issues, all of us. We must discuss our past and the context of our times. We must listen to the voices of our leaders, K. Ross Toole among them, listen to our own voices, the voices in the winds, and we must choose our direction for the future.

Jeffrey J. Smith
May 1985

Lecture 1, "Winds of Montana: An Introduction," begins the telecourse series (see page 1).

LECTURE 2

THE PRICE OF SPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

> *Put into your subliminal system a series of themes and constants which are going to appear in this course. That way I won't have to keep reminding you that these things are appearing and reappearing.*

PROFESSOR TOOLE TAKES SERIOUSLY THE adage that people who ignore their history are condemned to repeat it. It is legitimate, he has said, to worry that cyclical patterns evident in Montana's past may again appear. If the pattern of events was beneficial, we should encourage its resurfacing. But, if the pattern has been detrimental, we should be on our guard, know what we're doing, and perhaps take the initiative to prevent a recurrence.

For Dr. Toole, Montana's history begins with some practical realities. "Montana is big," he says simply. It is big, unpopulated (more than 11 times less populated than the national average), and it has been disproportionately endowed with natural resources: furs, timber, high protein native grass, water, enormous beauty, minerals, and, most important in our recent history, 55 billion tons of low-sulphur coal.

"Montana has never yet been paid at anything like a fair rate for the vast wealth that it has exported since the 1820s," Toole says, "and we are not being fairly paid now."

This is a distinct states' rights perspective. Make no mistake about that. Montana, Toole says, has always been capital short. The money needed to trap and transport the furs, to cut, mill, and market the timber, to drop the mining shafts into "the richest hill on earth," or to shovel and load the coal, has always come from outside the state. Often this has led to abuses both of the people who reside here and the land itself. Outsiders have fixed the prices for the products produced here. The marketplace has not always been free.

Adversity and open spaces, though, have repeatedly given rise to a very special kind of hero. Montana produces people "of very great courage and tenacity, and a kind of 'splendid perversity,' " Toole says.

That our state has unfolded this way, Toole infers, might be because of our remarkable distance from the traditional power centers of America. "An

Eastern-oriented Congress has passed laws in blindness and ignorance of the nature of our land," he says. He points to specific examples, of which the student should take note.

These are some of the themes – the patterns or cycles – to which Toole will repeatedly return. We have also sampled the historian himself, and it's obvious that, in the next few weeks, he will challenge our preconceptions of who we are, what Montana has been, and especially, what Montana might someday be.

> *This course is essentially about the dark side of things. There is a reason for that, and that is that good things don't need correcting and bad things do. Especially bad things that keep recurring in cycles, and that is essentially what this course is all about. It is the cycles that have afflicted us since at least the 1820s and still afflict us to this day. And if we are not aware of why these cyclical things occur, we're never going to correct them. I am going to suggest to you that there are reasons for their recurrence and that we do something about it.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Here are the major themes Dr. Toole will cover in his broad sweep of Montana's history. The historian is also introducing both himself and his strong perspective.

BEFORE VIEWING

It is important that the student face his or her own preconceptions of history and particularly Montana's history. It may be interesting to do this in an essay or class discussion. What part have Western movies and literature played in our perspective of our state? Have we ignored reality at the expense of myth? What do we think makes a Montana hero? Does living in this state today give us insight into those who have come before us?

Students should keep a record of their thoughts and preconceptions. At the end of the course, they should compare their initial impressions of Montana history with their final summaries. A survey course is by its very nature an attempt to introduce a time period and a people. Students should find their own interests within this continuum.

TEXT: K. Ross Toole, *Montana: An Uncommon Land,* Chapter I, pp. 3-10.

WHILE VIEWING

K. Ross Toole is not an impartial tour guide. Throughout the course he offers his opinions of Montana and its people. Students should ask themselves where they agree with him and where they disagree. Always, we should strive to develop our own opinions.

Students should also take notes beginning *now*.

Though most of this lecture deals with abstract themes, Dr. Toole mentions some very important statistics. In the 1860s and '70s, it was a 35-day steamboat trip up the Missouri River from St. Louis to Fort Benton, Montana. Even this route was closed nine months of the year. Only 20 to 30 steamboats made the trip each year. One boat arrived with 960 persons. Each passenger paid $300 plus $12 per pound for baggage. One ship, Toole says, went back to St. Louis with $918 million in gold dust and ore and $350 million in furs and buffalo skins.

It cost $145 to take a stage from Ogden, Utah, the terminal point of the Utah Northern Railroad, to Helena, Montana. Freight cost $6.50 per hundred pounds.

When the Northern Pacific Railroad arrived in 1883, it came to Montana at the price of 16 percent of the land in Montana, and most of this was bottom land. Distances from the mainstream, Toole is saying, have always been expensive. These statistics should go on the blackboard.

AFTER VIEWING

Students would do well to talk about the kind of person who is lecturing. "I am biased, I am prejudiced, I am bigoted, I am one-sided, and I am subjective," Toole readily admits. Perhaps we as viewers and learners should be as candid.

By introducing themselves to Montana history, students may want to think about how their own town, county, and region of Montana fits into some of the broad themes in this lecture. Does a person in Shelby grow up with a different concept of the state than a person born and raised in Libby? Obviously, he or she does. This is a good place to begin classroom discussion.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Dr. Toole talks about the difference between the myths and realities of Montana history. While he would concede that there is a strong need for myths, he would also assert that it is wrong to confuse myth with history. Myths distort the realities of the past, and the historian will not hesitate to call a myth what it is, even at the risk of killing a sacred cow.

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_____________ "The American West: Perpetual Mirage," *Harper's,* September 1957.

_____________ "The West and the Desert," *Montana, The Magazine of Western History,* Winter 1958.

Don't be surprised if, during this course, we search and search for the enemy and at last we find him and, having done so, conclude as Pogo concluded, 'We have met the enemy, and he is us.'

LECTURE 3

THE FIRST MONTANANS

Let's get over the idea that the Plains Indian was an ancient dweller on the plains. He was nothing of the kind. Where had Yuma man gone? Where had Folsom man gone? Where had Clovis man gone? They had been supplanted one by the other along the way, but the modern Indian was very new to the plains when the white man encountered him. Now mark this carefully: not one single tribe of Plains Indians, that is, east of the Continental Divide, was located in Montana on the plains prior to 1600. Not a single Indian tribe. What had happened?

NO "CAVE MAN" HAS EVER LIVED in Montana. The precursors to the Indians came to the area about 12,000 years ago by way of a land bridge that once existed between Siberia and Alaska. But this is the stuff of archeology, and Professor Toole spends little time here. He does tell us that archeologists have found the remains of three distinct examples of early man in Montana: Yuma man (7,000 years ago), Folsom man (10,000 years ago), and Clovis man (12,000 years ago). These people, though primitive, were as intelligent as we are in terms of the common archeological measuring stick, the cephalic index.

These prehistoric people hunted on foot, and they were very ingenious. There are over 100 "pishkuns," or buffalo jumps, in Montana. Many of these, Dr. Toole tells us, were disturbed when fertilizer entrepreneurs realized their value and bulldozed the sites. Not more than two or three virgin sites remain.

Dr. Toole then says only a few words about the origins of the Indian tribes that existed in Montana at the time of the first European explorers. He notes that by 1750, all the tribes had horses and guns. The native American cultures, as the whites found them, were relatively new to Montana. "What happened is a kind of domino effect or a marbles-in-a-tube effect," he says. As the colonists settled along the Atlantic Ocean and pushed westward, they pushed on the tribe immediately to their west; that tribe pushed west, and so on. Overall, Toole says, "The adaptation they made was remarkable."

In the second half of his lecture, Dr. Toole talks of the first explorers and their reasons for wanting to learn about Montana. The myth of the great

Northwest Passage to Canton, or China, a river passage that would go all the way to the Pacific, drove the European explorers. In 1703, Baron de Lohontan published a map of the "Longue Riviere," the Missouri. Supposedly based on his explorations in 1688, scholars now contend that the map was based more on the word-of-mouth of the Great Lakes tribes. Later, brothers Louis-Joseph and Francois de la Verendrye explored as far as the Bighorn Mountains in 1743. But it was Lewis and Clark, the Americans, who were the first to arrive at the headwaters of the Missouri in 1805.

Dr. Toole closes this lecture with a brief but rather complete description of the machinations of four empires vying for control over Louisiana, a territory greater in size than the fledgling United States east of the Mississippi, a territory filled with myth, a territory which included Montana.

President Thomas Jefferson, Toole infers, was a geopolitical thinker as sophisticated as Napoleon, the great French emperor. Jefferson knew that the destiny of the United States was irrevocably tied to the West. He had come to the presidency in 1801 with an exploration up the Missouri River already in mind. The ambitious Napoleon, however, wanted to disrupt the status quo and the British claims in the New World. Through the secret Treaty of San Ildefonso in 1800, France took possession of Louisiana from Spain. But Napoleon's plans went awry. Rather than see British power enhanced – the British wanted Louisiana, too – Napoleon sold the "Louisiana Purchase" to the United States.

Jefferson saw that his chief rivals in Louisiana were the British, and he acted quickly. The U.S. Congress appropriated the money and Meriwether Lewis, Jefferson's personal secretary and fellow Virginian, and his Kentucky-bred partner, William Clark, set out from St. Louis in the spring of 1804 for the Missouri River and, thence, Montana.

The amount of territory the Americans bought in the Louisiana Purchase (909,130 square miles) was more than the sum total of the United States (869,735). It included Louisiana, Arkansas, Nebraska, Iowa, North and South Dakota, as well as parts of Minnesota, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, and all of Montana east of the Continental Divide.

> *Livingston and Monroe said, 'Why not?' And they did. They bought the whole damn thing. It is usually said that Jefferson was stunningly surprised by this activity. I doubt it very much. He knew what Napoleon had lost, and he knew what was going on, and he knew how useless Louisiana now was to the French. And I don't think it was a surprise to Jefferson at all.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Dr. Toole introduces basic archeological and anthropological findings about the earliest Montanans. The history of Montana has always been one of adaptation. Colonial desires to move westward affected native

Americans. The desire to explore the vast and mysterious drainage of the Missouri River was shared by three other cultures besides the United States. The competition to claim Louisiana was geopolitical competition. One of America's brightest presidents, Jefferson, foresaw the inevitable: that Americans would expand westward into the Louisiana Territory, and he dispatched the Lewis and Clark expedition.

BEFORE VIEWING

There are differences and similarities between archeology and anthropology. And, since the background of this lecture has to do with human adaptations to the region we now call Montana, we may want to review the differences between these two disciplines through outside reading, class discussion, or essay assignment.

Students may want to think about and describe their own family's adaptations to this land. Native American students may want to trace their tribe's adaptations to the land and to the dominant white culture. Who knows most about his/her family? Who is the newest Montana resident? Who is the oldest? How did the woman of the tribe or settlement have to adapt?

TEXT: Toole, *Montana: An Uncommon Land,* Chapter II, pp. 11-39.

WHILE VIEWING

Students should note the differences between prehistoric man's culture and the post-1750 Plains Indian culture. They should note the degree to which information about Montana was available to Lewis and Clark, and they should list in their notes the reasons Jefferson wanted to explore the Louisiana Territory. Students should also write down any questions they may want to explore with their teacher because, of all Dr. Toole's lectures, this one covers the most ground.

A field trip to a nearby pishkun or archeological site or a visit by a museum director, anthropologist, or archeologist may aid students' understanding of this lecture. A tribal elder familiar with the tribe's history may also make a stimulating guest.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Anthropologists tell us that there were at least three language groups that adapted to what we now call Montana. Native Americans migrated from both east and west. While the tribes that moved into the plains pushed the Nez Perce and the Flatheads into the mountains, the Kutenai in northwestern Montana came into the state from the Pacific Coast. It may be, also, that the Apache and Navajo once dwelled in Montana, having broken off from the Athabascan-speaking people in Canada to make their migration slowly into the American Southwest.

At the time of the planning of the Lewis and Clark expedition, the U.S. was in a precarious position. Newly independent and in some measure still weak, still defining itself, the U.S. could barely hope to match the power of a full-scale assault on Louisiana by either the French or the English. It was a time of fluid international events. Jefferson sensed this and acted resourcefully.

Jefferson said, "There is on the globe one single spot, the possessor of which is our natural and habitual enemy. It is New Orleans through which the produce of 3/8ths of our territory must pass to market and from its fertility it will ere long yield more than half of our whole produce and contain more than half of our inhabitants."

Jefferson had a truly remarkable world view, and he intended to be the master of events. He recognized not only the wealth in furs that Louisiana offered, he also knew that the boundaries were not yet solidified. The United States could lay claim even to the territory beyond Louisiana. In St. Louis on May 9, 1804, Captain Lewis signed the documents transferring upper Louisiana from the Spanish to the French, and from the French to the Americans. Within days, he and Clark and a hardened crew of explorers set out up the Missouri River.

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The fact is that the Indian, the horse, and the gun met on the Great Plains.

LECTURE 4

THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION

Both men were highly intelligent people. The expedition was superbly and intelligently planned. The members of the expedition were extremely well trained and hardened before they left. The company had been recruited with the greatest of care. Lewis was a very good geographer, and there is no question about that. Clark was clearly a genius.

THOUGH MANY MONTANANS ARE FAMILIAR with the travels and the high adventure of the Lewis and Clark expedition, it may be that we are too entranced by the epic journey's romance at the expense of its broader significance. Indeed, a careful reading of the journals and maps can practically lead us to the very camping sites of the explorers. We get the feeling we can see exactly what they must have seen.

Professor Toole takes a different tack. He readily admits the romance, and he doesn't hesitate to mention a few of his own favorite tidbits of lore. But he also stresses the great international significance of the exploration. It was a profound diplomatic success! Commercially and scientifically the expedition also had important ramifications. And, culturally, for the first time Americans could actually picture the realities of the West, of that mysterious upper Louisiana. If it was possible for a party of American explorers to reach the Pacific by land, well, it was possible for the republic as a whole to expand that far.

On their way back, between the mouth of the Yellowstone River and St. Louis, Dr. Toole tells us that the expedition met no fewer than 11 fur parties bound upstream. One of the men, John Colter – who would later discover what would become Yellowstone National Park, or "Colter's Hell," as it was first called – left Lewis and Clark even before they reached St. Louis. Colter preferred to return to the upper Missouri to make his fortune in furs rather than strip off his buckskins for a clean shirt.

Many fortune seekers were to follow, and Dr. Toole spends the second half of his lecture examining the fur trade. "By the end of the first decade of the 19th century," he says, "Montana was being penetrated from the north by the great Hudson's Bay Company, chartered by the British Crown, the

Northwest Company, chartered by a couple of Scotsmen, and a whole host of American companies: the Missouri Fur Company, the American Fur Company, and others."

After describing the dynamics of furs—that beaver pelts had status when sewn into "high hats," as well as practical necessity in an age of few warm clothes—Dr. Toole sketches the mechanics of trapping furs in Montana. He says the East's system could not be grafted onto the Montana landscape. Instead, a "free trapper" system evolved whereby individual mountain men staked their territories and rendezvoused once a year to trade their furs for supplies. "If you want to get into the head of a free trapper," Dr. Toole says, "you should read A.B. Guthrie's *The Big Sky.*"

The fortunes lasted less than two decades. By 1834, the "heyday of the fur trade is over," Dr. Toole says. The natural resource gave out, and the improvements in silks and cotton manufacturing began to limit the price of beaver, otter, and mink. Hunters then pointed their Sharps rifles at the buffalo, and it didn't take long before 30 to 80 million buffalo were decimated.

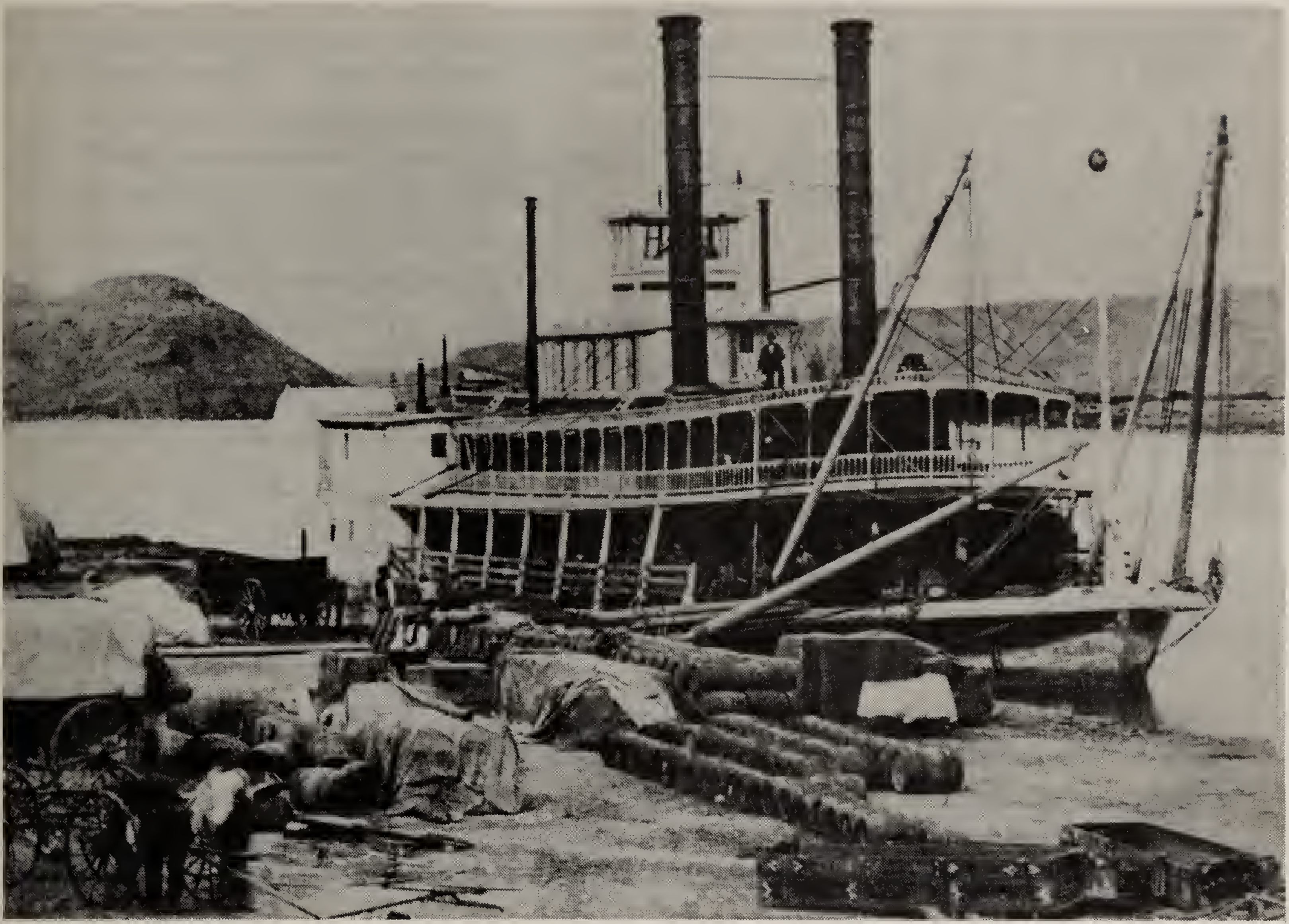
> *It's interesting that the British, coming down from Canada in 1812 into the Missoula area and the Bitterroot and the Big Hole, estimated that they could keep 300 men, in this region alone, busy for 100 years—so many beaver were there. As you know, the trade is actually over by 1834. So that lasted 11, 12, 13 years and that's it. It is not very hard to exploit natural resources if you are really determined to do it.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this lesson, Dr. Toole wants to make his students aware of the broader context of Lewis and Clark's achievements. Montana's riches became public knowledge for the first time. Lewis and Clark dispelled much of the myth and word-of-mouth geographical inaccuracies. And the first wave of explorers and entrepreneurs made their way up the Missouri into Montana. The commercial hunting of buffalo—30 to 80 million head—began with the demise of the fur trade. As the population of white men increased, the buffalo became more than the basis for native American culture in the West. It became part of the global economy, an economy hungry for furs and hides. That global economy prevailed, of course, and the indigenous population of Montana began a steep decline.

BEFORE VIEWING

Students should make a point of reading some of the Montana journal entries of Lewis and Clark (and other trappers and traders). There is a lyric beauty, an artistic touch, in the writings about Montana, particularly in



Montana Historical Society

The steamboat DeSmet *at Fort Benton ca. 1870, one of the many boats that made their way up the Missouri River from St. Louis and opened the Montana frontier.*

As explorers Lewis and Clark returned in 1806 from their epic journey into the unexplored country of the Columbia and Missouri headwaters, they encountered fur trappers and traders already bound for the riches of the Montana wilderness. Miners soon followed them, and freight routes linking river transportation and the gold camps of southwestern Montana made Fort Benton a busy port—America's most remote river port in the 1860s.

Lewis' journal. Here is high adventure. Read aloud the passages written near Great Falls (grizzlies!), up the Beaverhead (first meeting with the Shoshoni), up the Bitterroot (Flathead Indians and their magnificent horses), to Travelers' Rest at the mouth of Lolo Creek, and Lewis' violent encounter with the Blackfeet (the only skirmish of the whole journey – good thing he slept with his pistol). In any event, the writings of Montana's earliest white visitors will give students a context for Dr. Toole's discussion of broader consequences.

This might also be a good place for drama. Adventurous history classes can choose specific passages to re-enact. Who wants to play Captain Lewis? Sacajawea? A skilled horseman or woman of the Flathead tribe?

TEXT: Toole, *Montana: An Uncommon Land,* Chapter III, pp. 40-56.

WHILE VIEWING

This lecture has no introduction. Viewers should be ready right away to take notes on Professor Toole's rather technical discussion of the Lewis and Clark exploration. With his mention of John Colter halfway through the lecture, Dr. Toole begins his discussion of the fur trade and its consequences. It is important to note that the Eastern system of trapping imposed on Montana did not work. Even when a group of Indians from the East – the Iroquois – were brought in to "train" the Flatheads around 1812, it didn't work. Students should also heed the reasons for the decline of Montana's first commercial industries: furs and buffalo robes.

AFTER VIEWING

Trapping is still a $10-million-a-year industry in Montana. Coyote, beaver, mink, marten, bobcat, and Canadian lynx from Montana are considered some of the world's finest furs. Why not bring to class a modern trapper? The Montana Trappers Association (PO Box 29, Seeley Lake, MT 59868) recently defined its code of ethics and divided Montana into seven management districts. A discussion of predator control, resource preservation, and trapper's perspective of Montana's ecology then and now may help students relate to the land and the earliest practitioners of fur trapping and trading.

Also, students may want to think about present-day Montana economics. Is there a dependency similar to the Indian's reliance on buffalo? What resources are being used these days?

BACKGROUND NOTES

Articles and books have been written on specific – some might say obscure – sidetrips of Lewis and Clark: Lewis on the Marias River, the Lolo

Trail, Lewis and Clark in Iowa, etc. Some writers have concentrated on the guns Lewis and Clark used, Lewis' scientific instruction in Philadelphia before the exploration began, and the medicines the explorers used. Historians are still debating significant facets of the explorers' lives after their return. For example, Lewis died at age 35, and the circumstances of his death still divide scholars. Was he murdered, or did he go insane and shoot himself?

There is tremendous depth and almost eccentric diversity in the scholarship about this time in Montana. There is a great deal for the neophyte to explore.

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We have the photographs of the gathering of buffalo bones in the boxcar-like piles alongside the railroad tracks. Because it was good fertilizer! It was a massive slaughter.

LECTURE 5

THE FLATHEAD APOSTASY

Where did we go basically wrong? Not necessarily in intentions, because if you read the doctrines of the day, the newspapers of the day, the novels of the day, good intentions, especially from humanitarians and ex-abolitionists, were all over the place. The problem is, of course, that the road to hell is paved with good intentions if you don't know what you're doing. And they didn't know what they were doing.

THE POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES reached 31 million in 1860. There were probably 300,000 native Americans in the United States and its territories, most of whom lived west of the Mississippi. Dee Brown, author of *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee,* estimated that their numbers had already declined by one-half to two-thirds since the arrival of the first settlers in Virginia and New England.

Toole begins his fifth lecture, the first of two consecutive lectures about Montana's Indian tribes, by describing some of the factors that led to the decline of the native Americans in Montana. "None of the treaties that we made – 370 of them – ever recognized that the Indian was fundamentally a nomadic person," he states. The Indians had little sense of private property, and their tribal structure did not conform to contract law. The U.S. government did not put forth a consistent policy. There was a split in authority between the Departments of War and Interior. The army could not enforce its stipulation that settlers remain in corridors through Indian country. The buffalo was everything to the Indian, and now it was gone. Smallpox and whiskey, two scourges for which the whites had developed at least a minimum of tolerance, ravaged the native Americans. "Between 1835 and 1837," Dr. Toole says, "half the Blackfeet people died of smallpox."

Dr. Toole narrates the story of the "black robes" among the Flatheads, or Salish tribe. On September 24, 1841, the priests arrived near present-day Stevensville to establish St. Mary's Mission. By that first Christmas, Pierre-Jean DeSmet, two other Jesuits, and three lay brothers – a blacksmith, a carpenter, and a tinsmith – had baptized more than 700 Indians. Individuals from 200 other Indian nations had made their way to seek the counsel of the "black robes." The mission was the site of the first agriculture in Montana, the first cattle, and the first grain mill. But the precipitate increase in the influence of the Jesuits at St. Mary's began an equally rapid decline in the fall of 1846. By 1850 the Indians had stopped coming to the mission, and it was sold to a white trader named John Owen.

"We were not a little astonished," wrote Father Anthony Ravalli in his diary when the Salish began to deny their Christianity in 1846. Dr. Toole interprets the Indians' reversal of faith this way: The Indians began to have second thoughts about the priests when DeSmet told them he would begin a mission in the territory of the Blackfeet, the Salish's archenemies. Angus McDonald, a mean-spirited, anti-Catholic, anti-American trader at Fort Connah near Flathead Lake, counseled the Indians against the Jesuits every chance he could get. While DeSmet and his colleagues encouraged the Salish to reject their own religious traditions, the missionaries made no similar attempt to adapt their own cultural biases. We call the Salish rejection of the missionaries the "Flathead Apostasy."

Finally, Dr. Toole begins an extended review of the U.S. policy toward native Americans. In 1870 the Grant Administration promoted a "peace policy" designed to correct a scandal-plagued tribal agent system. Religious groups would nominate the agents, Grant proposed. "It didn't work," Dr. Toole says, "because the religious groups never met their obligations. Some tribes went without agents for more than 10 years."

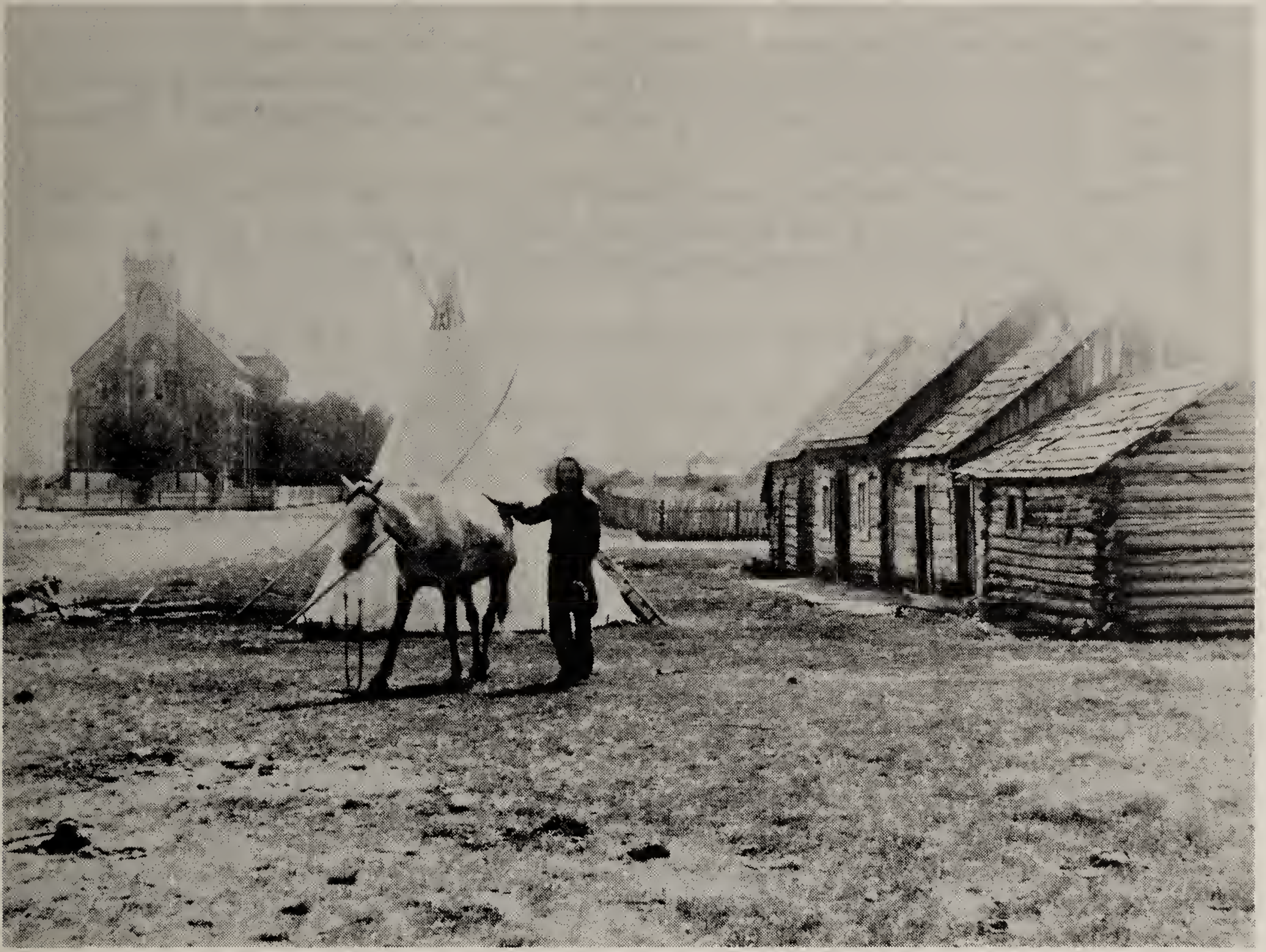
> *I think that, number one, while the Jesuits asked the Indians to study Catholicism or Christianity, they themselves made no study whatsoever of Indian religion. And I think they confused form with substance. The Indians' religion, of course, varied greatly from tribe to tribe. But Indian religion had this in common: among all tribes it was eclectic. That is to say, however, elaborate it was—and it was very elaborate and in some cases very sophisticated—they saw nothing wrong whatsoever with adopting some other tribe's god or some other tribe's spirits. If it seemed to work, take it in, use it. That didn't trouble them in the least.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Having described the economic and political factors that encouraged the U.S. explorations in Montana, Dr. Toole now describes the consequences for Montana's native American residents and the clash of white and Indian cultures. His lecture concentrates on the Salish tribe. Beginning in 1805, when Lewis and Clark met them in Ross' Hole (Sula) in the upper Bitterroot Valley, the Salish readily accepted visitors from outside their culture. Dr. Toole's priority is to examine, in microcosm through the detailed journals of the Jesuit missionaries, the effects of the earliest white settlement in Montana.

BEFORE VIEWING

Again, some discussion of anthropology may be important before Dr. Toole's analysis of the St. Mary's Mission story. In any clash of two cultures,



Montana Historical Society

Three worlds meet at St. Ignatius Mission in western Montana. The mission served the Kutenai, Pend d'Oreilles and Flatheads, who moved from the Bitterroot Valley to a reservation south of Flathead Lake. The original mission was established in 1854.

there is always an exchange. Rarely is it an equal exchange. Because of the superiority of technology and other reasons, one culture usually dominates the other. Even so, the less powerful successfully influences its competitor. In what ways is this still occurring in Montana? Outside Montana? What are some concrete examples?

There are many drawings and descriptions of St. Mary's Mission as it was in the 1840s. Some of the best appear in *Montana Genesis,* a "community history" produced by the Stevensville Historical Society in 1971.

TEXT: Toole, *Montana: An Uncommon Land,* Chapter III, pp. 56-63.

WHILE VIEWING

Again, everyone should be ready to take notes at the beginning of the lecture. The situation described is not black and white, and viewers should attempt to master the weave of events that led to what Dr. Toole calls "the end of freedom of the Indian people."

Do students agree with Toole's interpretation of the missionaries' influence on the Salish? Does not the fact that the Salish never took up arms against the dominant culture prove that, in some senses at least, the missionaries succeeded in preparing the Salish for what would come later?

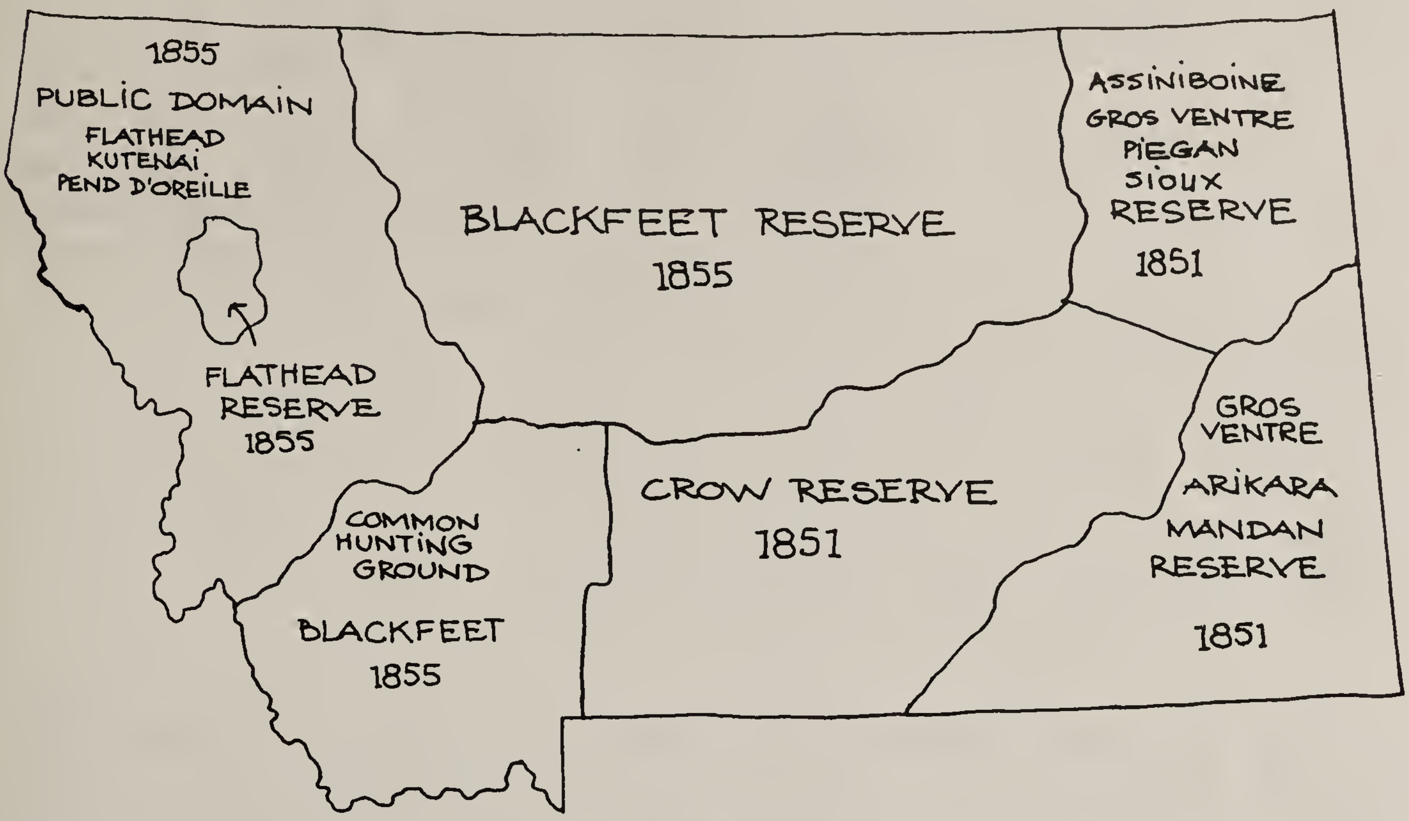
AFTER VIEWING

As Dr. Toole tells us, researchers have been unable to find the site of Pierre-Jean DeSmet's original mission on the Bitterroot River. John Owen's trading post, however, is a well-preserved historical site. What about a field trip to Fort Owen near Stevensville?

Also, students may want to detail other Montana tribes' first interactions with the dominant American culture. Some of these began before Lewis and Clark entered the country. Others begin in the explorers' journals; others still later.

BACKGROUND NOTES

As Professor Toole mentioned in his previous lecture, a band of 20 Iroquois led by "Big Ignace" (Ignace LaMousse) traveled from the Great Lakes region before 1820 to live with the Salish. As they were to Lewis and Clark, the Salish also were hospitable to the Iroquois and listened to their descriptions of the "black robes" and their powerful spiritual "medicine." Though these visitors failed to teach their hosts the fine art of trapping furs, the Iroquois impressed the Salish enough with their tales of the Great Spirit and the fruits of heaven. The Salish sent four separate expeditions to St. Louis to bring back the priests. Big Face, the Salish chief, traveled to Wyoming with 10 of his most trusted warriors to meet Father DeSmet in 1840. The next year, DeSmet returned to establish the mission called St. Mary's.



Montana's Indian reserves, 1864. The original seven reservations totaled over 50 million acres. By 1947 Indian land had shrunk to five million acres, all by treaty.

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They were mortal enemies. For DeSmet now to suggest that he was going to take the same medicine, the protective medicine which the Flatheads now have, and give it to their mortal enemies, the Blackfeet, must have been terribly, terribly disturbing to them.

LECTURE 6

INDIAN AND WHITE WARFARE

> *Now, after allotment—and this is the crucial part of the Dawes Act—after allotment all extra land, once the Indian picked his 160 acres, all the extra land was to be sold to whites. The Flathead Reservation up here lost one million acres that way. Land sold to whites. If you wonder, when you drive up to Flathead Lake, why you don't see Indians, why you see whites, that's why.*

ELEVEN TRIBES CALLED MONTANA their home in the early 19th century. They were the Kutenai, Kalispell, Flathead, Shoshoni, Crow, Blackfeet, Chippewa and Cree, Cheyenne, Gros Ventre (or Atsina), and the Assiniboine. Tribes from nearby regions also came to Montana to hunt.

Before the discovery of gold on Benetsee, or Gold Creek in 1858, Montana remained isolated. Westward travel usually occurred to Montana's south. Horses from the Spanish and guns from the French and British met with the tribes in Montana and, other than the missionaries and a few isolated trappers and traders, Americans tended to avoid the dangers of the continent's northern tier.

It took nearly 20 years after the discovery of gold, roughly 1860 to 1880, before a proud and nomadic people were subdued, deprived of their freedom of access to their traditional hunting grounds, and forced to remain on reservations.

Professor Toole opens his sixth lecture by telling us that Montana's reservations were established between 1881 (Crow Reservation) and 1916 (Rocky Boy Reservation). Montana's seven reservations originally totaled over 50 million acres. By 1947 Indian land had shrunk to five million acres, all of this done by treaty. He blames the General Allotment Act of 1887, called the Dawes Act, for the destruction of the Indian land grants. The act treated native Americans just like whites and allotted each tribal member 160 acres of land. The rest was sold to white farmers and ranchers. The Flathead Reservation, Dr. Toole says, lost one million acres to non-Indians.

The U.S. reversed its policy again during the New Deal era, when it passed the Wheeler-Howard Act of 1934. This law re-created tribal land ownership, provided credit funds to incorporated tribes, and limited resource development on the reservations. Many tribes, including the Flathead, got back some of the land they had lost.

Another brief policy reversal came during the 1950s, when a policy called "termination" was proposed. Dr. Toole says its effects were minor and, due

Montana Historical Society

Three Sisters, a Crow woman. The changes wrought on the lives of Indian men and women in the late 19th and early 20th century, as the white culture came to dominate the Great Plains, are reflected in the words of Pretty Shield, a Crow medicine woman interviewed by ethnographer Frank Linderman in the early 1930s: "I am trying to live a life I do not understand...Ours was a different world before the buffalo went away, and I belong to that other world."

to the strength of the opposition from the Indians themselves, the policy failed.

In the second half of this lecture, Dr. Toole tells the two best known stories of Montana Indian history: Custer's Last Stand and the Flight of Chief Joseph. He calls Custer's attack on a force of 4,000 Indians with his 270 men a monumental blunder. The general knew that he was following an Indian encampment that owned an estimated 20,000 horses. When a force that size crosses the landscape, he says, "they do not leave a little path." Custer also knew that his midmorning attack was not a surprise to the Indians.

After plotting Chief Joseph's retreat for us, Dr. Toole uses the words of Civil War General William Tecumseh Sherman to describe the action as "one of the most extraordinary Indian wars of which there is any record. The Indians throughout displayed a courage and a skill that elicited universal praise. They fought with scientific skill."

> *The Secretary of the Interior put a little P.S. on this thing and said: 'I think it's still demonstrably clear that as a mere question of pecuniary economy it would be cheaper to feed every adult Indian now living, even to sleepy surfeiting during his natural life, than it would be to carry on a general Indian war for another single year.'*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

A professor teaching a survey course in history must sometimes make difficult choices within a rich and varied past. This works two ways. In one case, it may be difficult for the student to fully master the intricacies of Montana Indian history. On the other hand, however, choice leaves a good deal of material for student discovery and independent study. Pursue your interest with book reports, class reports, or independent study assignments.

Toole wanted his students to consider the effects of federal legislation on Montana's largest minority population. In some senses, the East-dominated legislation fits into one of Dr. Toole's primary historical themes: often Montanans have had little control over the policies implemented in their interest. He cites three complete reversals of Indian policy from 1887 to the mid-1950s. Students should become familiar with (and take notes on) the names and effects of each piece of legislation.

The stories of General George Armstrong Custer and Chief Joseph need little introduction, and Professor Toole tells them with a minimum of background information. His telling may dispel some of the listener's lingering myths, however.

BEFORE VIEWING

Chapter VI of Dr. Toole's text, *Montana: An Uncommon Land,* is a must for advanced students. In addition, students may want to read aloud some of the documented descriptions of the battles fought in Montana. The battle of the Little Bighorn has a larger bibliography than the battle of Gettysburg, the turning point of the Civil War. Indian eyewitness accounts are available in a number of books, including John Neihardt's *Black Elk Speaks* and Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee.*

TEXT: Toole, *Montana: An Uncommon Land,* Chapter VI, pp. 115-138.

WHILE VIEWING

Note-taking please.

AFTER VIEWING

A tribal historian familiar with the effects of federal legislation on his or her particular tribe would make a very helpful class guest at this point.

A field trip to one of the battle sites also might bring some of Dr. Toole's points alive. The Montana Historical Society in Helena (444-2694) can recommend a historian who would be willing to accompany a group to a historical site.

BACKGROUND NOTES

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs whom Dr. Toole quotes halfway through his lecture is Ely Parker, or Donehagawa of the Seneca Nation. He was a trusted aide to General Grant during the Civil War. Because of his superior penmanship, it was Parker who actually wrote the terms of the surrender agreement that ended the war. He was a college-educated engineer who was consistently critical of the military's extermination policies.

Ely Parker is just one example of a native American who, very early in the history of this country, achieved a position of influence. Another is Sitting Bull, who spoke at the ceremony celebrating the driving of the last spike of the transcontinental Northern Pacific Railroad in 1882 and traveled with Wild Bill Cody's Wild West Show throughout the U.S. and Canada. This is fertile ground for independent study.

The buffalo were gone. Fortune seekers and cattlemen poured into Montana from all sides. Unlike the missionaries and trappers, these people demanded protection from Indian raids. The Helena *Herald* estimated that over a thousand horses were stolen and 56 whites killed during the summer of 1869. The Piegan War of 1870 was the military's response. In January 1870, in what is called the "Baker Massacre," 173 Blackfeet, including 53 women and children, were killed.

Before General Custer's ill-fated foray in 1876, only 600 soldiers were stationed in Montana. Scholars estimate the Indian population at 13,000. When Chief Joseph made his 1,800-mile dash through Montana just a year and a

Montana Historical Society

Crow schoolchildren, 1896. By the 1880s, the mainstay of traditional native American diet and cosmology—the buffalo—was gone, and organized resistance to white ingression had ceased. To a proud nomadic people who freely hunted the great expanse of the Northern Plains, reservation life meant a painful reorientation from their distinctive culture to the ways of Anglo society.

half later, there were 3,000 federal troops in the state. Between 1866 and 1892, the army established a dozen forts in Montana.

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Moreover, Custer had Crow scouts with him. And the Crow scouts rode ahead, peeked over the hills and looked down on the camp, came back and said, 'George, don't do it.'

LECTURE 7

THE GOLD RUSH YEARS

> *But the thing that is imperative to remember is this: that it was the miner the farmers came to feed. It was the miner that the merchants came to sell to and the thieves came to steal from. And when you have merchants and farmers and thieves, as you all know, you have what you commonly call civilization.*

FROM 1862 TO 1876, MONTANA PLACER MINES produced about $90.8 million worth of gold. The gold rush was on, and it was to permanently shape Montana for those who followed.

By 1862 things were right for the rush to Montana, isolated as it was. The riches of California had given out. All the claims in Nevada, Oregon, Colorado, and Idaho were crowded with fortune seekers. The first steamboat, the *Chippewa,* had plied the rapids of the Missouri River to Fort Benton in 1859. Lieutenant John Mullan had built a military road to Walla Walla, Washington (a 60-day journey). Wagon master and pioneer James L. Fisk established the Northern Overland Expedition, the first wagon train from the Great Lakes to Montana. From 1864 on, the Bozeman Trail came up from the Union Pacific Railroad depot at Corrine, Utah.

Even given our roots in the fast-paced late 20th century, we can be astonished at the rapidity with which Montana's gold was discovered and taken out of state.

Though they had made their initial discovery on Gold, or Benetsee Creek in 1858, it was spring of 1862 before James and Granville Stuart assembled enough tools to work the creek for riches. By midsummer, their settlement had a name, American Fork, and a population of 60. In July that same year, John White struck gold on Grasshopper Creek, and Bannack City was born. By the next spring, a thousand people worked claims there. May 1863 brought the richest find thus far: 12 miles of gold along Alder Gulch. Virginia City, only 70 miles from Bannack, drew 6,000 people by the new year. In three years, Virginia City yielded $25 million in gold nuggets, flakes, and dust.

"This was a frontier that moved from west to east," Professor Toole tells us, unlike much of what had come before or was to come later. The miners brought with them the methods and the laws of placer mining, decidedly Western in origin. Dr. Toole calls the population in the camps "polyglot" (speaking many languages) and "peripatetic" (moving, changing very quickly). Placer mining was "ephemeral" (short-lived). The "gulch governments" swung into action quickly, with a minimum of overhead. They wanted little distraction from their occupation: getting the gold out of the ground.

Placer miners were not the only opportunists to swarm into Montana. Farmers came to feed them. Freighters came to haul their supplies. Merchants and saloon-keepers came to pinch gold dust from the miners' buckskin pouches. Stage lines sprang up; numerous steamboats pushed up the Missouri River when they could. The support system evolved quickly and got the job done.

But the lightly structured, rapidly evolving society in Montana also was perfect for that breed of men who take advantage of others. Henry Plummer and his secret gang of 24 filtered into the towns of Bannack and Virginia City easily. They found positions of influence and exploited the people without moderation. They murdered 102 known victims and stole unknown quantities of gold until the miners rose up to defend themselves.

Territorial government was still a long way off in Lewiston, Idaho. In a number of clear-cut criminal cases in Virginia City, the criminals intimidated the juries. The lightweight gulch government just wasn't up to the task; outrageous crimes continued. By January 1863, the vigilantes had elected a three-person executive council. Forty-five men signed a vigilante code.

Between December 21 and January 11, Plummer and his 24, as well as eight other men, were hanged. Dr. Toole tells us that the vigilantes were "people of real substance." Many became leaders of the new Montana Territory after the gold gave out. They also were helped in their task by a "blabbermouth" who named names, Erastus "Red" Yeager. As a result, the vigilantes didn't make mistakes, and they surrendered the power they took into their own hands when they were sure the territorial government was strong enough to do the job without them.

Dr. Toole won't leave his lecturn this time without trying to balance this rather violent episode with some insights into the average Virginia City resident. One vigilante, Nathaniel Langford, says in his memoir, *Vigilante Days and Ways,* "People walked the streets in fear." But Dr. Toole cites two diaries that disprove the ubiquitous Western myth that everyone was a gun-toting desperado. Both of these young Virginia City miners describe the entire vigilante period without mentioning a hanging, road agent, or crime. Instead, they write about the fledgling Virginia City Social Club and the Literary Association. One of them, J. K. Miller, was taking French lessons!

"Don't be misled by the ipso facto view which has crept into our history books," Dr. Toole tells us, "that all of it was riotous living and murder and hangings. It just wasn't true."

There isn't anything here at all. East of the mountains there is Fort Benton, a sleepy little adobe village which is not long to remain sleepy. It is to become a terrific boom town. West of the mountains, you've got Fort Owen up the Bitterroot, Fort Connah up the Flathead, and that's about it.

All of a sudden, starting in 1860 or late '59, tens of thousands of human beings mostly coming from the west, pour into all the remote gulches, what is literally a howling wilderness.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This is Dr. Toole's only lecture on placer mining. He tells how it was done, the kinds of people who did it, and from where they came. The miners and those who followed them presented "a wedge of settlement" in Montana. Gold mining was generally a boom-and-a-ghost-town bust. It was *very* distinct from the hardrock mining that was soon to succeed it in 1876 in Butte City, Montana Territory. Nevertheless, placer mining – as temporary, disorganized, and frenzied as it was – did lay the cornerstone of permanent settlement in Montana. Many of our communities raised up from the wilderness during the placer mining period remain with us today.

When Montana became a territory in its own right in May 1864, approximately 16,000 people lived here – three-fourths of them in Madison County (Bannack and Virginia City).

BEFORE VIEWING

The *Montana Post* in Virginia City, Montana's first newspaper, was published by Thomas Dimsdale throughout the placer mining period. Both Dimsdale and Nathaniel Langford published memoirs as well. Students should read these direct preservations of the placer mining days. There are some wonderful anecdotes.

Many of those drawn to Montana during this time were former Confederates from the Civil War. In his book, *Montana: High, Wide and Handsome,* Joseph Kinsey Howard mentions a legend which said that the left wing of Confederate General Price's army in Missouri never surrendered. It retreated to Montana. At any rate, there is a rebellious, independent spirit at work during this period, and students may want to explore the details of placer mining life. Are there any remnants of that spirit still at work?

TEXT: Toole, *Montana: An Uncommon Land,* Chapter IV, pp. 64-94.

WHILE VIEWING

Dr. Toole wants to disparage two Western myths. The first is the myth of the old "Hollywood prospector." He says that among the miners were "some very prestigious and important people." They weren't eccentric old n'er-do-wells leading burros. There were immigrants, Southerners, ethnic minorities, and women.

The second myth is that the period was all violence and strife. This was part of it, of course, but not a very important or relevant part of people's lives.

AFTER VIEWING

The placer mining period was probably the most romantic period in Montana's history. No wonder so much has been made of its myths. A man really could go from being completely broke in the middle of a desolate wilderness to finding a claim worth millions of dollars. It is a uniquely colorful blink of the eye, a period every student will want to explore on his or her own. This history is as immediate as a field trip to one of the ghost towns. Assessments of the kind of life it was, class reports, and journalistic "slices of life" should be part of a student's immersion in this period.

Get out a map and see if you can find Gold Creek, Bannack, Virginia City, Helena, and some of the minor strikes. Profiling some of these early Montanans, too, is an important exercise. The right character's name will reappear over and over again.

The Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology in Butte still runs placer mining courses for beginners. A weekend course is available for a fee and includes a field guide, metals testing kit, and a geologist's compass. The bureau is a good place to start if you are looking for an interesting guest speaker. Contact the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, West Park Street, Butte, MT 59701 (496-4171).

BACKGROUND NOTES

No one knows who first discovered gold in Montana. Professor Toole tells us that a half-native-American, half-Frenchman named Francois Findlay, or Benetsee, presented a teaspoon-sized amount of gold dust to Angus McDonald at Fort Connah in 1850. John Owen mentions finding some gold in the Bitterroot in 1852. And John Silverthorne, a mountain man, is said to have appeared in Fort Benton in 1856 with $1,525 worth of dust. For one reason or another, these people didn't pursue these opportunities. Then James and Granville Stuart, on their way back from a disappointing journey to the California gold fields, "struck colors" on Gold Creek, 60 miles east of Missoula

These were not New England-style villages the miners established. It must have been with a sense of irony and optimism that they called these settlements of tents, wickiups, crude log cabins, and unpainted clapboard houses "cities"—Bannack *City,* Virginia *City,* etc.

Bill Fairweather, Henry Edgar, and a group of four other ragged adventurers had just barely managed to escape certain death at the hands of the Sioux in spring of 1863. They were headed back to Bannack when they reached the western slopes of the Tobacco Root Mountains, 70 miles from the town. They decided to pan for gold in the creek, if only to see if they could come up with tobacco money. Fairweather picked up a nugget that weighed in at $2.40. Their dejection immediately turned to jubilation! In two days of panning, the six men had $189. Then they headed back to Bannack for more supplies. Thus Alder Gulch—which would be renamed Virginia City and would reward its miners with $100 million in gold—was discovered.

A few points about the vigilantes. First, they were lucky. They did not make many mistakes. Once you release the emotions of taking the law into your own hands, it is difficult to control them. Students may want to research the case of James Daniels as an example. He was captured by vigilantes in Helena, turned over to civil authorities, and a jury found him guilty of manslaughter. He was pardoned by the acting governor of the territory, released, and then hanged by the vigilantes. Langford says the vigilantes "committed an irreparable error in the execution of this man."

Discuss the risks and benefits of vigilante justice. It is a topical subject, even today, given the 1984 subway shootings by Bernard Goetz.

Second, the people in Montana had confidence in "the code of the vigilantes." The straw that broke the camel's back was the murder of Lloyd Magruder, a well-known, well-liked merchant who had just sold $30,000 worth of badly needed Bitterroot merchandise in Virginia City. On his way back to his home in Elk City, Idaho, Magruder was murdered with an axe. His companions were shot in their bedrolls. These killings aroused intense indignation in Virginia City and quieted any dissent among miners to the organization of a "Vigilance Committee." Nathaniel Langford notes that the vigilantes knew they would be held accountable before the territorial authorities for any unwarranted exercise of power. "The necessities of the hour was their justification," he writes.

Langford also says that "an air of civil restraint took the place of recklessness" after they finished their gruesome tasks. Pistols and knives weren't brandished in saloons, and gambling wasn't as dangerous.

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They knocked down the door, pounded on it, opened it, said, 'We want Zachary, too, O'Keefe.'

O'Keefe didn't much care; Zachary was taken away. O'Keefe closed the door. But he can hear the conversation outside.

'Why don't we, since we're here, hang O'Keefe, too?'

Somebody said, 'Well, we can't do that. He hasn't killed anybody yet.'

'No, he hasn't, but he certainly is going to, and we could save a lot of time.'

They debated this momentarily and then decided that it was colder than hell. 'Let's just go hang Zachary and be done with it.'

I tell you that story because I am personally indebted to the vigilantes. C. C. O'Keefe was my great-grandfather and...think of the loss of posterity had they hanged him.

LECTURE 8

THE ACHES AND PAIN OF A NEW TERRITORY

> *Historians took it literally, and it crept into the history books. It just was never true. For example, in 1870 there were—it was awfully hard to count out here—about 18,000 people in Montana Territory. But only 1,500 of them had Southern origins, so all this business about Confederate influence in Montana is just not true. I'm sorry.*

MONTANA WAS DECLARED a Territory on May 26, 1864. Professor Toole says that, for extended periods, the new government didn't function. "When it was there," he says, "it was extraordinarily bizarre."

The first governor of Montana Territory, Sidney Edgerton, was appointed by President Abraham Lincoln and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. Members of the territorial legislature, three state supreme court justices, and a territorial delegate to the U.S. Congress were elected by universal manhood suffrage. The federal government forgot to appoint a territorial secretary—a substantial omission because, by federal law, he was the only person authorized to sign checks. In other words, the government started out broke.

Edgerton was a Unionist and Republican, and he fanned the fire of the Civil War with emotional rhetoric. "He said that southerners were full of lust and insane desire and guilty of crime and perfidy," Dr. Toole tells us. It wasn't very long before he sent in his resignation while on a trip to Ohio to see about his daughter's education.

General Thomas Francis Meagher, whose statue is now in front of the state's Capitol, was then appointed acting governor. Meagher led a flamboyant, if brief life. Dr. Toole says that, "Like Custer, his star was rather waning when he reached Montana." "In his judgment he was hasty, and he thought of force before he considered reason," states his biographer, Robert Athens, who called him "restless, high strung, truculent and noisy, brash, verbose, and belligerent."

Meagher was born in Ireland and became a leader in the Irish independence movement. After the uprising of 1848 in Ireland, a British court sentenced him to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. Queen Victoria commuted his sentence to life imprisonment in Tasmania. Meagher escaped and made his way to New York, where he published the *Irish Times*. He then explored Central America, and led the 68th New York Regiment, "the Bloody Irish," in the Civil War.

Meagher's Montana career lasted two years – long enough for him to call two illegal sessions of the territorial legislature, call a constitutional convention whose constitution was never printed, and raise an army that cost $1.1 million. Dr. Toole says the army was completely ineffectual.

Meagher died at the age of 45 in Fort Benton under mysterious circumstances. Despite a reward of $10,000, his body was never recovered. Seems he fell off a Missouri River steamboat in the middle of the night.

> *As the evening wore on, he was standing out on the levee, the main street of Fort Benton, pulled out his guns, and kept saying, 'They're after me, they're after me.' Some of his friends tucked him on board a steamboat, put him to bed. He had on a long nightgown and one of those caps with a tassle on it. About midnight, one of the guards on the boat saw this ghostlike figure emerge from the cabin, run around the deck three or four times, and fall over the river side. And Thomas Francis Meagher was drowned, and his body was never found.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Politically, Montana's territorial period (1864-89) represented a chaotic quarter century. The deep divisions of the Civil War reached this far. The Republicans, Lincoln's party, controlled all the territorial appointments. Only briefly did these appointees govern effectively. The majority of citizens were independent-minded and Democrats. They wanted a negotiated settlement to the war. They may not have been born and raised in the South, but they did not look with favor on the federal government. The Republican territorial governors "waived the bloody shirt," as Dr. Toole puts it. They called the Democrats traitors.

Political problems in Montana mirrored national problems. As much as the Democrats took exception to the doings in Washington, D.C., they had a great deal more in common with the great American debate over secession than they did with Canadian or Mexican politics. Nevertheless, Montana issues – getting on with what was best for Montana and its people – were obscured in the destructive rhetoric of war and reconstruction. When the federal government did manage to communicate with Montana Territory, it did so intermittently and with tremendous neglect.

BEFORE VIEWING

Does everyone know the difference between a territory and a state?

A review of the issues of the Civil War and Reconstruction may be in order. Some of the original 13 states and their Confederate neighbors not only disagreed with the federal government, they disagreed enough to secede from the Union.

The issue was slavery, yes, but it also was division of wealth and influence. What many territorial Montanans saw when they looked back at Washington was a government distant from their reality. As Dr. Toole mentioned, most were not from the South. Even so, they weren't certain they wanted to be part of the Union. The reverse is true, too. Republicans in power in Washington, reading dispatches from their appointees, weren't sure they wanted to invest their heavily strained resources on a state with a Democratic population. It was a stand-off. The appointees, in the middle of the fray, believing that the Republic, the Union, was supreme, rarely accomplished much.

WHILE VIEWING

In the rush of first viewing, students may miss some of the many people mentioned in this lecture, including: Sidney Edgerton, first governor of Montana Territory; Thomas Meagher, appointed secretary and then acting governor; Wilbur Fisk Sanders, a former vigilante and future U.S. Senator from Montana; Thomas Dimsdale, editor of the *Montana Post*; Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Lincoln as U.S. President; Charles Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State; General William Tecumseh Sherman, who commanded the Division of the Missouri and was responsible for Montana military affairs; and John Bozeman, an explorer who helped open up the Gallatin Valley for agriculture.

AFTER VIEWING

It's time for map reading once again. Can you locate the main 1870s Montana settlements? Where are their major transportation routes? Remember, there are not yet any railroads in Montana.

A worthwhile independent study or class report might be to research how Montana's nonmining cities began—Great Falls, Miles City, Missoula, Bozeman, Billings.

BACKGROUND NOTES

The sentiments of the general population became clear in the way people voted. In the first territorial delegate election in 1864, the lines were clearly drawn between the Unionist, W.F. Sanders, and the Democrat, Samuel McLean. McLean won easily.

John H. Rogers, a former Confederate soldier, was elected to a seat in the territorial assembly. He refused to take the required oath of allegiance to the United States. Instead, he proposed to sign an oath of support for the U.S. and the Organic Act, which governed Montana Territory. Support for the

Union and the act which separated the territories from that Union are not the same thing as allegiance. Though Rogers' fellow legislators accepted his hedging, Governor Edgerton was incensed. He threatened to declare the legislature null and void if Rogers was seated. Rogers resigned, but when Edgerton went back East and also resigned, Rogers was re-elected to the legislature.

There were a few exceptions to the poor leadership during these 25 years. In 1866 President Johnson appointed Green Clay Smith governor of Montana Territory. Smith had missed becoming Lincoln's vice-president in 1864 by one-half a vote. Though he stayed not much more than a year, Smith recognized three main problems in Montana: an effective militia law was needed to prevent another haphazard, expensive militia from being organized, the territory needed effective and fair tax laws, and Montana would need outside capital to develop its resources.

Benjamin F. Potts served as governor from 1870-1883. He was well respected by the people, encouraged outside capital, managed territorial finances, and balanced local independence and Washington mistrust of "Western radicals."

After 20 years of territorial appointments and federal neglect, Montanans were ready for statehood and ready to elect their own governor. A constitutional convention assembled in Helena in 1884. With the war far behind, the delegates could concentrate on the task at hand. When put to popular vote, the constitution was favored four to one by the 20,000 eligible voters. Territorial delegate Joseph K. Toole presented Montana's case for statehood in 1889, and Congress passed the petition.

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Wilbur Fisk Sanders was so infuriated by Meagher and by his crazy situation, he got on his horse and went to Washington. He had a lot of contacts there. And the Congress of the United States declared all the sessions, 1864 to 1866, null and void.

LECTURE 9

THE PRECIOUS METAL: COPPER

In 1876, Butte City, Montana, which is what it was then called, had a settled population of under 3,000 souls. It had one newspaper, the Butte Miner. *It had two breweries, no drug store, no hospital, and 23 saloons. It had one opera house, which had a big sign in the foyer that said all guns were to be checked and that masks were to be raised to the committee at masquerade balls.*

AGRICULTURAL STATES DEVELOP SLOWLY. They gather their culture and wealth as the good seasons multiply. Services, problems, and law and order develop as the needs arise. Not so in Montana. Though we may be an agricultural state now, we began as an industrial state: quickly.

The rapidity with which Montana's gold was discovered and mined was exceeded only by the rapidity with which Montana's heavy-metal industry developed. Dr. Toole turns his attention to the beginnings of the state's industrial era. His next five lectures concentrate on Butte, "the richest hill on earth," the city its residents say is "a mile high, a mile deep, where everybody is on the level."

Between 1884 and 1905, a third of the world's copper came from Butte. The official government estimate of the worth of Butte's resources during those 20 years was $900 million. Some historians say that we should add another $100 million that "disappeared" in the company's accounting. Dr. Toole tells us to multiply by eight every time we encounter a 19th-century dollar figure.

Many territorial Montanans adapted to this industrial boom town society. As C.B. Connolly writes in *The Devil Learns to Vote,* "The wealthy banker shaking hands with old friends from distant parts of the state is a man who used to drive bull teams across a thousand miles of treacherous prairie." One former bullwhacker, William Andrews Clark, owned five mines in Butte, a stamp mill, and a smelter on the south side of Silver Bow Creek by 1876. At that time—the year Clark's rival, Marcus Daly, arrived in Butte—there was another smelter, the Parrot Smelting Works. Both were small and geared to refining silver. The rail line had not yet crossed Montana's border from Corinne, Utah, and all the refined silver had to be freighted to the railhead by mule teams.

Clark, it is said, was making a $25 to $30 profit on each ton of silver ore. A company called Walker Brothers of Salt Lake City sent a young and successful miner, Marcus Daly, to examine the Alice Mine in Butte. It seems the owners of that mine were buying supplies from the Walkers and paying with silver bullion. At that point, the mineral riches of Butte became more than a rumor.

"Butte had been undergoing a very bad time because placer mining had run out rapidly," Toole says. Daly was exactly what Butte needed. He purchased the Alice Mine for Walker Brothers and invested $30,000 of his own money.

Daly ran the Alice from 1876 to 1880. He then sold his interest in the mine for $100,000, a tidy profit. He was ready to go independent. He bought the Anaconda Mine from Edward and Michael Hickey. Michael Hickey, a Union soldier during the Civil War, liked newspaper editor Horace Greeley's description of the Union army surrounding General Robert E. Lee's army "like an anaconda" and named his mine after the phrase.

Daly didn't care that the name would become famous throughout the world. In early 1881, he sought investments from three wealthy San Francisco mining entrepreneurs, George Hearst, James Ben Ali Haggin, and Lloyd Tevis. When the money came, Daly built hoisting equipment and dropped the Anaconda's shaft 700 feet. In the spring of 1882 he invited his investors to Butte. It was easier for them to come to Butte now because the Utah Northern Railroad had laid tracks there. This, plus other factors, led Daly to put forth a bold proposition to his backers.

The silver in the Anaconda Mine was running out. But, in Daly's opinion, it was time to shift emphasis to copper. Daly proposed all new hoisting equipment, new mining shafts, the largest smelter in the world, and a city – Anaconda – to go along with everything else. He told them that coal was available not too far away, as well as virgin timber – millions of acres of timber – to shore up the mine shafts and burn in the smelter. Getting these resources to Butte meant building rail lines.

It was a risky, ambitious proposal. But Daly told investors that electric wires made of copper, electric machines that used copper, and cities linked household to household by copper wires would be coming soon. The market, Daly told them, was posed to explode, and they would be in the right place at the right time to make millions beyond their investments. According to his diary, George Hearst told Daly that he didn't know anything about copper mining and refining. He was against the plan. The other potential investor, James Ben Ali Haggin, didn't say anything until he had heard all of what Daly had to say. He then turned to Hearst and said, "George, I think we'd better go along with Mr. Daly." That go-ahead, practically a blank check, gave birth to the Anaconda Copper Mining Company.

On September 3, 1884, the first fires roared in the furnaces of the largest smelter in the world in Anaconda, Montana Territory. More than smelting fires started that day. "Here, in effect," Dr. Toole says, "begins the real political history of Montana because nothing political makes any sense unless you start with the Anaconda Copper Mining Company."

But Anaconda copper didn't enter a free market. There were two other major copper suppliers in the world. The "experts" said that this new Western upstart, so far from cheap transportation and without the "pure" copper lodes of its competitors, would fail. These experts didn't know Marcus Daly.

Backed by Boston financiers, Michigan's Calumet and Hecla Company controlled copper prices at 18 cents a pound. Six months before Anaconda fired up its huge smelter, this Michigan syndicate dropped copper prices to

15 cents per pound. They were trying to bankrupt their Montana competitor even before its smelter got going. Anaconda responded by putting on double shifts. The Michigan mines dropped their price to 11½ cents in November 1884. The next month they sold 7,000 tons of copper at seven cents a pound. It was a message to Marcus Daly: How far do you want to go before you have to shut down?

There was panic in the world market. A prestigious mining journal predicted that either Anaconda or the Lake Superior mines would be ruined. Early in 1886, the Michigan syndicate struck again and reduced its price to 10 cents. Mines all over the world, including some in Butte, shut down. But not Marcus Daly. Anaconda installed $150,000 worth of new crushers. This was his own message to the Michigan cartel.

In the end, Daly's prediction to Haggin and Hearst proved true. There was a burgeoning electric revolution. The world's demand for copper was exploding. Daly's shrewd mass production techniques carried the day. Calumet and Hecla's vicelike grip on the world's copper market was broken, and Montana's new economy was on its way.

> *"So what, you say. It was just a mine. Well, not quite. Because here begins the real story of heavy mining in Montana. As a consequence, here begins the real story of Montana's economic growth, including lumber, agriculture, labor, and small business. Here begins the story of events that extend their influence far, far into the 20th century. We all are aware of what happened in Anaconda recently [the 1980 shutdown of Anaconda smelting operations]. Here, in effect, begins the real political history of Montana. Nothing political makes sense at all unless you start with the Anaconda Copper Mining Company.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Professor Toole describes 10 years (1876-1885) of precipitate development in Butte. The arrival of an Irish immigrant mining speculator, Marcus Daly, began it all. Daly turned this relatively untouched wilderness into an industrial giant. Daly brought in investors, searched the world for the finest technologies, and never wavered when the competition got rough. By the end of 1885, Butte's copper production already rivaled that of its competitors. All other businesses and occupations in Montana, with few exceptions, became dependent upon copper mining.

BEFORE VIEWING

The conflicts of the territorial period, based primarily on the divisions and the emotional edge of the Civil War, have subsided. Placer mining is giving out. And there are indications of vast mineral wealth locked in the quartz below the surface of Butte City, Montana. Students should try to appreciate the overwhelming problems of this scene in 1876. The problems were overwhelming to everyone except one man, Marcus Daly.

Some students may want to research Marcus Daly's background – an Irish immigrant, a former New York City newspaper boy, and a miner himself. Others may want to examine the specific problems he encountered and the solutions he proposed. Remember that Daly not only had to believe in these solutions himself, he also had to convince wealthy investors that his solutions were possible.

Perhaps a parallel problem solving exercise should be part fantasy. An expert in new fuels comes to Montana and discovers that there is an abundance on "zonknite," a mineral with tremendous potential as a solid rocket fuel. So far, everyone in the world has used zonknite for building pottery flower pots and as a supplement for dog and cat food. No one realizes that a new field of rockets is just on the horizon, and an entrepreneur – an expert in new fuels – can develop a whole new industry in Montana. What kinds of problems will this person encounter today?

TEXT: Toole, *Montana: An Uncommon Land,* pp. 158-185.

WHILE VIEWING

Again, names and dates are important. Professor Toole is laying the foundation for an entire era of Montana history, and students should be primed to take notes before watching this lecture.

Students should also keep in mind the parallels between the development of Montana's quartz mines and the placer period that has just passed. Earlier, the rumors stressed that fortunes could be made panning for gold, and thousands entered the state. Now, the rumors suggested there was work. It was hard work in a country not far from wilderness, but the wages were good. There was some security in the jobs because the market for copper was expanding exponentially. Perhaps a person wouldn't make a fortune in Butte, but he could provide a decent standard of living for his family and, getting in on the ground floor, who knows where a person would end up? This was the American dream.

AFTER VIEWING

Professor Toole is very much interested in Montana's economic history. Though cultural history does play a part in this lecture, there is little doubt that the student has room to expand his or her understanding of the daily lives of the average Montanan during this time. Butte has always cut itself apart from the rest of our state and, to a certain extent, from the rest of the world. Its uniqueness is something to enjoy. Students may want to peruse the book, *Copper Camp,* written during the Depression by the Writer's Program of the Montana Works Project Administration. These stories bring alive the roughness and the beauty of life in Butte. The writers pay attention to the state's minority populations: Chinese, native Americans, and European ethnic cultures. Reading aloud some of these stories can supplement Dr. Toole's concentration on Butte's role in Montana's economic development.

To a certain extent, high school students shouldn't shy away from economic history, either. Dr. Toole repeatedly mentions terms like *free market, cartel,* and *syndicate.* Again, a hypothetical situation may work more effectively than a textbook explanation. Suppose several students get together to control a market of importance to their peers (chewing gum? running shoes? notebooks? soft drinks?). They are getting a good price for their wares until another student enters the market, and their sales drop by almost a third. What do they do when they realize the newcomer means to overtake their market?

A brief discussion of the increase in gasoline prices over the past 10 years might also help explain some of the economic theories Professor Toole is talking about.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Butte began in May 1864 as a placer camp on Silver Bow Creek. By 1866 miners had taken $1.5 million in gold, and what was left was embedded in quartz. The population was declining. Without a railroad line and outside investors, the future looked bleak.

By 1879 silver began to replace gold as Montana's primary commodity. From the time Marcus Daly first arrived in Butte (1876) and the Utah Northern Railroad reached the town (1881), Butte's population doubled. It doubled again before the second railroad connected Butte to the Northern Pacific's route (1886). It doubled a third time by 1888, when the Montana Central Railroad pulled into Butte for the first time. This was astonishing growth for a town so far from the mainstream. By 1890 the population of Montana as a whole was 143,000.

Butte's production of valuable ore likewise grew. In 1882 Butte realized $6.3 million from its ores. By 1883 Butte's monthly payroll was half a million dollars, and the town was producing $9 million in ore. By 1884 the Anaconda Company alone employed 7,000 people. The smelter used 150 tons of coal and 700 cords of wood per day. That's 300,000 cords of wood per year, plus up to 40,000 board feet of lumber just for the mines. If you take into account the transportation systems that had to be built and the rapid growth of housing and support services, Montana was booming.

In 1885 Montana produced $10 million in silver, $7 million in copper, and $3 million in gold.

Within 42 days after Marcus Daly chose Nate Levingood's meadow on Warm Springs Creek in 1883 for the site of his huge smelter, 1,500 people were living there. Daly himself had laid out the streets of Anaconda and built three brickyards, six sawmills, and a sash factory. There were blacksmith shops, stores, saloons, and merchants. Daly and his investors invested $4 million in the mine and smelter before the first fire roared in its furnaces.

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Now, take and use a little imagination. These three men are sitting on a hill looking out over what is essentially a wilderness, a spiney, forlorn, hot, cold, miserable land, with a grubheap of a little town beneath their feet. And this man is proposing this kind of thing to James Ben Ali Haggin and George Hearst. Yes, he was.

LECTURE 10

THE INTERNATIONAL COPPER CARTEL

The demand for copper has burgeoned tremendously. Why? Well, it's 1886, the end of the Montana-Michigan Price War. By this time you have a tremendous demand due to the burgeoning electricity industry. Cities all over the world are putting up electric street lights, or arc lights. All kinds of uses for electricity are now beginning to boom, so you have a low price, a shortage of copper, and a tremendous demand for copper. Left to itself—namely the marketplace, the sacred marketplace—the price of copper would have stabilized according to supply and demand. But it was not left to itself.

BY 1887 MONTANA'S COPPER MINES HAD come into their own. Michigan's Calumet and Hecla syndicate had tried to force Marcus Daly to concede that his new mining operation in Butte could not compete with the established producers. The syndicate failed. Daly's mines were producing 115 tons of refined copper per day. By 1880 three-fifths of the wage earners in Montana were dependent on the Anaconda Copper Mining Company.

But things could have been better.

A French metals magnate, Hyacinthe Secretan, watched the Montana-Michigan Price War with interest. He watched the effects of the 10-cents-per-pound prices on the companies. Many of the world's producers were shut down. Secretan also watched the demand for copper explode as the electrical revolution expanded.

Professor Toole tells us that the price of copper would have stabilized according to the laws of supply and demand. With a low supply—10 cents a pound wasn't enough to encourage producers to go all out—and ever higher demand, the price would go up if left alone. "But it was not left to itself," he says.

Hyacinthe Secretan was the world's largest manufacturer of brass and copper products. He had just made a fortune supplying cartridges in shell casings for the French during the Franco-Prussian War. He had also nearly succeeded in cornering the world tin market. Dr. Toole calls him "sleazy."

Secretan went around to each copper producer and asked him to restrict copper production in exchange for a guaranteed 30-year price of 13 cents per pound. They would have to sell all their copper to Secretan's syndicate, backed by 16 European banks and their investment of $13.5 million. James Haggin, the chief investor in Marcus Daly's operations, liked the idea. Daly did not, but Daly was a junior partner and was overruled. The Anaconda Company was the first international copper producer to sign the agreement.

The syndicate then charged 18 cents per pound for its copper, making a quick five cents per pound profit on everything sold. Secretan increased his price to 20 cents. All worked well until the summer of 1888, when word leaked out that the president of Comptoir, the Parisian bank that was one of the scheme's main investors, had committed suicide when he realized the syndicate was failing. There was panic in the market. The syndicate was going to dump 400 million pounds of copper on the market at whatever price it could get: five cents a pound!

Though the Anaconda Company had already been paid 13 cents for its share of this copper, its market would be completely destroyed until that 400 million pounds of surplus was used up. In other words, there would be no more copper sales for three to five years. Secretan's syndicate, even though it failed, was threatening to do what the Lake Superior syndicate couldn't do: put the Anaconda Company out of business.

James Haggin came to Butte to talk to Daly. The two of them decided that Haggin should go to Michigan, join with Quincy Adams Shaw of the Calumet and Hecla Company, and then go to Paris to try to reason with the others. On April 13, 1889, Haggin and the other American copper producers sat down with the French, English, and German bankers. "It was a long meeting," Dr. Toole says. "It was acrimonious." In the end, everyone agreed to restrict copper production for five years and to gradually dump the 400 million pounds of surplus copper gradually into the world market. Everyone would get 12 cents per pound.

"For six long years," Dr. Toole concludes his lecture, "Butte, Anaconda—and hence, all of Montana—suffered terribly. The stores, the lumber camps, the eastern agricultural industry, truck gardeners, everybody suffered terribly; people were fired all over the place." Montana had just gone through its first boom cycle, and Montana had just fallen bust.

> *There was nothing in Montana newspapers, with one exception. In a rather good newspaper in Butte, called the Butte* Intermountain, *I found one squib and this is it: 'Rumor has it that our production in Butte is limited by a copper syndicate operating in Europe. This is nonsense. Mr. Haggin is not making copper at 13 cents for the benefit of frog-eating speculators.' That is, however, precisely what Mr. Haggin was doing, and it was very much against Mr. Daly's will.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Professor Toole's tenth lecture has more than an economics lesson. An economic history scholar, Dr. Toole doesn't hesitate to describe the

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Butte shift bosses at noon hour (ca. 1908-1912).

economics of Hyacinthe Secretan's ambitious plan. More than that, however, he is giving contemporary Montana history students an insight into Montana's first boom and bust cycle. It is a cycle over which Montanans themselves had little control. The copper industry promoted furious development in Butte and throughout the state. But when James Haggin, the San Francisco investor, decided – over Marcus Daly's objections – to sign the European syndicate's agreement, he signed for every Montana resident as well.

BEFORE VIEWING

Because this lecture concentrates on the technicalities of copper economics, it may be a bit complex for a high school viewer. The lecture does provide an important parallel to the more accessible "War of the Copper Kings" lectures that follow. It is important for us to realize that Butte jumped from an isolated, though well-endowed, piece of real estate in the middle of a wilderness to a mining concern tremendously affected by the world market. Perhaps the best way for students to approach this phenomenon is through independent research. Questions for study might include:

1. What were the dimensions of the electrical revolution?
2. How were the first large-scale electrical generating plants constructed? Where were they? What fuel did they burn?
3. What were the most important machines that used copper wire? Who were the inventors?
4. How has electric wiring changed over time? Do we still use copper wires for telephones? for electric machinery? for the wiring in our new homes?
5. What is the specific refining process for copper, silver, gold? How have these processes changed?
6. Where does most of our copper come from now?
7. What industrial scale mines are still operating in Montana? Where are new ones proposed? How does a company get a mining permit?

TEXT: Toole, *Montana: An Uncommon Land,* pp. 169-173.

WHILE VIEWING

Professor Toole's lecture is a straightforward historical account of Hyacinthe Secretan's plan. Already Butte had entered the tight world of copper financing. Students should pay attention to the details of the plan and Professor Toole's conclusions: cartels get greedy. Secretan's monopoly worked for almost two years. Only when he raised his price to 20 cents per pound did he lose control of the market. At 20 cents, junk copper – copper recycled from pots and pans—entered the market. It was profitable for the junk dealer to influence the market for copper. Secretan lost control, and the syndicate fell apart. Everyone suffered, including Montana's wage earners.

AFTER VIEWING

Many of Montana's products still enter the world market. A Simms, Montana, cattle dealer has sold 2,500 head of Charolais cattle to South Koreans over the past few years. Exporting is no longer restricted to large companies; $542.9 million worth of Montana's agricultural industry leads the way. Students interested in researching the kinds of Montana products in the world marketplace should contact Montana's foreign trade office at the State Department of Commerce (444-3923, Helena).

BACKGROUND NOTES

Secretan's syndicate was not the first nor the last attempt to control the copper market. The Michigan copper producers, based on the Keweenaw Peninsula, broke up the monopoly of the British in 1845. They then dominated until Marcus Daly built his Anaconda copper smelter. Secretan's venture was in turn watched by H. H. Rogers of the Standard Oil Company. Standard Oil will figure prominently in the future course of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, as we shall see.

A cartel is a group of companies that agree to set prices for their products. Often their formal agreement includes production limits and penalties for companies that violate them. Currently, cartels are illegal in the United States because they create monopolies that raise prices and restrict free trade.

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Well, let me tell you quickly what happened. James Ben Ali Haggin and Marcus Daly had a meeting in Butte, Montana. Isn't it strange that things of such magnitude would center in Butte, Montana? But they did. It is one of the things that makes the history of Montana absolutely unique among the states in the Union.

He and Daly had a long conversation. I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall, but I was not.

LECTURE 11

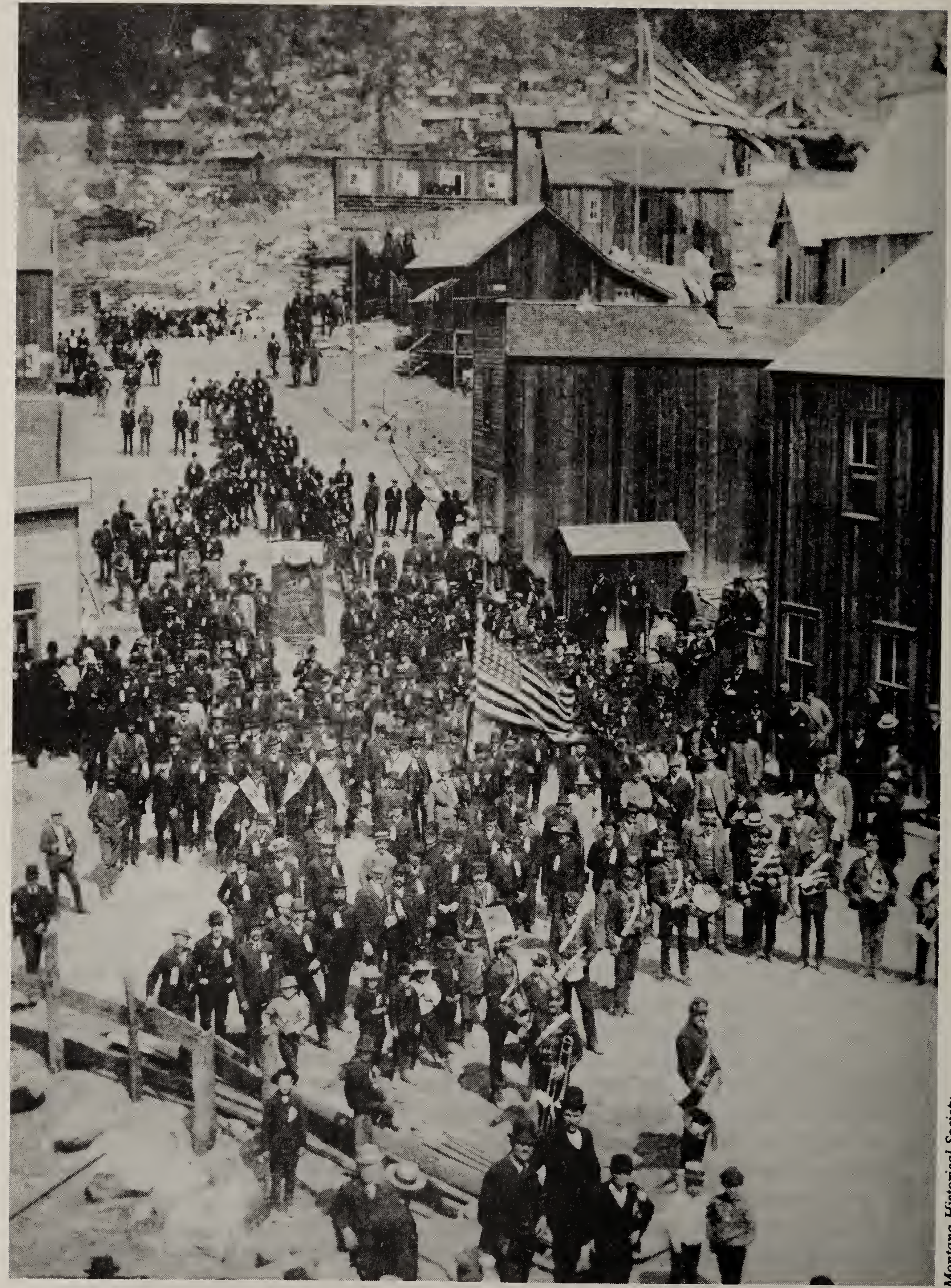
THE WAR OF THE COPPER KINGS

> *Back in 1862, way back in the early placer period, there was a fellow who came into the mining camp of Bannack, Montana, a fellow who was described by contemporaries this way: 'He was a little red-haired man with a pack on his back. He wore a red shirt, an old army coat with one of the tails burned off by too close proximity to the fire'—and I love this next phrase—'A little man with a thin neck and eyes like a bird.' This was of course, William A. Clark, and you should know that he was carrying in the pack on his back three books:* Poems *by Robert Burns, which represents studied recreation—this man studies everything he does; Hitchcock's* Elements of Geology*—perfectly obvious where he's headed; and Parson's* On Contracts*—again, perfectly obvious what this man is up to.*

SOME HISTORIANS HAVE SIMPLIFIED the origins of the "War of the Copper Kings," the feud between William Clark and Marcus Daly, Montana's copper industry titans. Some blame the personality differences between the two men: one an educated, overly proud man, the other an Irish immigrant with a brogue who would sit down on a bench in Butte and jawbone with his employees. Some conclude that Clark publicly snubbed Daly, and Daly never forgot.

Professor Toole discounts these personality differences. He says that the origins of the conflict were economic and political, not personal. By 1888, one year before Montana's statehood, the state was still a Democratic Party stronghold. The Southern influence, so divisive during the placer mining period, had declined. Now, the "Big Four" industrialists—Daly, Clark, C.A. Broadwater and S.T. Hauser—dominated the party. In the summer of 1888, Clark won the primary election for territorial delegate to Congress. In an ordinary year, this would have meant sure victory in the November election. In fact, some say Clark was already packing his bags for Washington, D.C., when the returns came in. To his shock, his opponent, Thomas Carter, a Missoula lawyer and Republican, won by 5,000 votes—a landslide.

When he analyzed the returns, Clark realized that he had lost in every precinct where Marcus Daly had influence. He had even lost in his home



Montana Historical Society

Miners Union Day at Granite (near Philipsburg) in the 1880s. Metal mining and union labor evolved together in Montana. The copper town of Butte was a bastion of unionism—"the strongest union town on earth," one writer said in 1912—and other towns followed its lead, organizing for job security and better working conditions. Unions would remain a strong social and political influence in the state well into the 20th century.

precinct! The other Big Four leaders had also instructed their employees to vote against Clark, and Clark was humiliated. He vowed revenge.

Dr. Toole says that it was timber, not personality, that swung the election of 1888. The Anaconda Company's supply of timber was being threatened by federal land commissioner William Andrew Jackson Sparks' interpretation of federal law.

According to federal law, the harvesting of timber on government land was restricted to 160-acre plots. It was a law that may have worked well in the East. Toole says it didn't work in Montana. Moreover, the railroad, which owned alternating 20-mile-square sections of land along its right-of-way, was restricted from cutting timber on those lands until the federal government completed a survey of the boundaries. The survey had been delayed, and the Anaconda Company, in the middle of the Montana-Michigan Price War, needed timber – 300,000 cords of wood for its smelter plus 40,000 board feet of lumber for its mines. "An interruption in wood supplies would be absolutely devastating, and [Daly] would have lost the Montana-Michigan Price War," Dr. Toole tells us. In other words, Daly and his partner, S.T. Hauser, were deeply and illegally involved in cutting federal timber.

In 1888 it appeared that a Republican, Benjamin Harrison, would succeed Grover Cleveland as President of the United States. Montana's industrial leaders concluded that Thomas Carter, the Republican candidate for territorial delegate, would better represent their interests. Professor Toole quotes from a letter written by E.L. Bonner, one of the investors in Anaconda's timber supplier, the Montana Improvement Company: "We figured that if Carter was elected, he could be of assistance to us. If Clark went from Montana, we could not only not expect any favors but the probabilities were that we would have an enemy."

"This was the reason all the Democrats deserted Clark," Dr. Toole says. The first salvo of a battle that would dominate Montana politics until Marcus Daly died in 1900 was fired. It was the first time, Dr. Toole says, that there was a strong relationship between money and votes. Daly and Hauser had instructed their employees to vote for Carter, and the employees complied. From now on, politics in Montana would follow this pattern.

> *Now, I don't know why I always confuse this class with what happens next, but I always do. So, I will probably begin to repeat myself. Clark was a Democrat. Clark was a Democrat. Clark was a Democrat. He was not a Republican. He was not a Republican. He was not a Republican. Daly was a Democrat. Hauser was a Democrat. Broadwater was a Democrat. All of these magnates were Democrats, Democrats, Democrats...They were not Republicans.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Dr. Toole describes the third of three important battles fought by Marcus Daly in the 1880s. The Montana-Michigan Price War and Daly's maneuvering during the formation of the Secretan syndicate had already set the tone of Daly's determination to succeed. His third battle, called "the War of the Copper Kings," begins with Daly demonstrating powerful block voting during the election of Thomas Carter as territorial delegate in 1888. Manipulating elections would color Montana politics for years to come.

BEFORE VIEWING

Dr. Toole focuses on the election of Montana's territorial delegate in 1888. Students may be interested to know that the structure of Montana's elections was very similar to our elections today. In a primary election, candidates from the same party competed for their party members' votes. The winners of these primaries then faced their opponent from the other party (or parties) in the general election in November. In 1888 the two main parties were the Democrats and the Republicans.

Students may want to discover the differences between those late 19th-century elections and our contemporary elections. For one thing, it was not uncommon for employers to "suggest" that their employees vote for a specific candidate. Since there were no secret ballots, the company foreman could accompany the men to the voting station. And, there were no women voters. Universal woman suffrage was not part of the U.S. Constitution until 1920. Because of these two differences, employers had far greater influence on the outcome of an election than they do now. It follows, therefore, that in a sparsely populated state like Montana, employers were very powerful.

Dr. Toole also refers to the importance of both the wood products industry and the railroads, beginning in the 1880s. Students may want to present reports to the class on the origins of Montana's logging industry, its methods and how they differ from today's industry.

Three railroads—the Utah Northern, the Northern Pacific, and the Montana Central—began operating in the state within a seven-year period in the 1880s. Montana went from having very primitive transportation to being truly well-endowed. Knowing that our railroads have been from that time onwards an important part of Montana's employment and myth, students may want to research the origins and the changes in Montana's railroads.

WHILE VIEWING

The events of importance in this lecture take place in 1888. Dr. Toole does backtrack to cover the history of the Montana Improvement Company, Montana's largest lumber operation. The company was incorporated to provide timber and cord wood to the Anaconda Mining operation in 1883. The important point is not the dates of incorporation, but the fact that the company was cutting timber illegally. From 1882 to 1885, Henry Teller of Colorado was Secretary of the Interior. Teller interpreted federal law to allow the timber cutting. At the very least, he did nothing to oppose the actions of the Montana Improvement Company. When Grover Cleveland took over the presidency, his appointees in the Interior Department singled out the

Montana Improvement Company for "flagrant, limitless depredations." It was a difference of interpretation that could have shut down the Anaconda Company's struggle to stay afloat during the Montana-Michigan Price War. When the federal government's suits were settled in the Supreme Court, Dr. Toole says that Andrew Hammond, the company's owner, was fined $7,066. Dr. Toole tells us that Hammond cut over $30 million of illegal timber.

Though this story appears to be an anecdote somewhat unrelated to the War of the Copper Kings, it is, in fact, the reason Daly and two other industrialists encouraged voters to vote against William Clark for territorial representative.

AFTER VIEWING

Dr. Toole has introduced us to the most powerful men in Montana Territory. Over the past five lectures, he has given us brief biographical sketches of Marcus Daly, William Clark, Andrew Hammond, W.F. Sanders, and others. Students may want to supplement these brief biographies with further research of their own.

Biographies are fun to do, and they are very popular reading. Students should not be content with the few, brief biographical sketches we have seen so far. Biographies should not be limited to male industrialists or other figures of power. Women played important roles in Montana's development. There was a large Chinese population in Butte and other mining communities. Other minorities played important roles. Black cavalrymen, for instance, were called "Buffalo Soldiers" by the native Americans, and there were black miners and minstrels in Butte.

This also was a time of extensive change in America's ethnic makeup. In the Butte mines alone, Swedes, Finns, Irishmen, Germans, Englishmen, and many other nationalities worked side by side. All this makes for exciting further study. Journals, newspaper accounts, and books like *Copper Camp* (see page 46) are ideal for further research.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Originally from Pennsylvania, William Clark was raised in Iowa. He taught school in Missouri after a few years of college. Missouri was on the edge of civilization, and Clark must have watched as thousands of Americans set out for adventures in the West. When word of Colorado's mineral riches made the newspapers, he couldn't wait any longer. He set out for Colorado in 1862.

That same year, he made it to Bannack in time to hear about the placer strikes in Virginia City. With two others, he took a claim not far from Virginia City; by the time the winter closed down their work in the stream, Clark came away with a few thousand dollars beyond his debts. Having had enough of mining, he invested some of his money in a wagon and a team of mules and set out for Salt Lake City, 400 miles away.

That winter, bread was selling for a dollar a pound, and the miners in Alder Gulch were eager to pay five to 10 times the Salt Lake price for food and clothing. Business promised more profits than mining and Clark, after a few trips to Salt Lake, took a contract for delivering mail between Missoula and Walla Walla, Washington. It wasn't long before he hired a foreman. He was an ambitious man in a country of opportunity. By 1869 he and two partners opened a bank in Deer Lodge. Clark bought four claims in Butte in 1866 and spent a year in New York City at the Columbia School of Mines. By the time Marcus Daly entered Butte, Clark had five producing mines, a stamp mill, and a small refinery. When Daly built his copper smelter, Clark also switched from silver mining to copper. C.B. Connolly writes in *The Devil Learns to Vote* that William Clark's income in the early 1890s was $1 million a month from one of his Butte mines alone.

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LECTURE 12

THE BATTLE ESCALATES

In 1894 the temporary capital of Montana was Helena. There had been a run-off election in 1892 in which there were a number of participants, including Missoula. Missoula didn't want the capital. It wanted the prison. But it got a booby prize instead, the university. In any event, the capital fight—so called in 1894—was between two finalists: Anaconda and Helena. I don't think Clark was terribly enthusiastic about the whole thing, but since Daly was, and since he wanted Anaconda, Clark obviously went all out for Helena. These two gentlemen spent about $1,500,000 on this campaign.

BY 1890, 43,000 PEOPLE LIVED IN BUTTE. The state's population was 143,000. Most Montanans were living west of the Continental Divide. By 1892 Butte had surpassed Michigan as the world's leader in copper production. It's no surprise, as Dr. Toole tells us, that Helena had more millionaires per capita than any other city in the country. They even had their own club there, the Montana Club.

Daly had won the first real skirmish of the "War of the Copper Kings" in 1888, when Thomas H. Carter beat William A. Clark in the election for territorial delegate to Congress. Daly and Clark went head-to-head a second time when Montana voters were called upon to choose the state capital in 1894. They tried to influence voters any way they could: free whiskey, dollar bills given out on the streets of Butte, parades, parties, and band music. Historians tell of a lot of absenteeism in the mines during the latter parts of this campaign. And workers were pressured again to vote as their employers wanted. Professor Toole says, "Montana simply went on a binge."

Dr. Toole says that the records show that 55,000 votes were cast in the election, even though only 51,500 were registered to vote! The corruption of the territorial delegate election a few years earlier was miniscule compared to the tactics used to decide the capital. In the end, Helena won by 2,000 votes, and Clark threw one of the biggest victory parties Helena has ever seen. Celebrants took Clark's carriage horses out of their harnesses and pulled him through the streets, cheering.

Dr. Toole says that the precedent established in the 1888 territory delegate election continued with the capital election, further corrupting Montana's election process. He also says that it was the fear of the capital being located in the company town of Anaconda, rather than the bribes or the pressure tactics, that ultimately swung the votes.

In 1898 Daly and Clark again competed for supporters during the state legislature election. Daly's forces clearly won a majority. Satisfied, Daly went to New York to spend the winter. Clark didn't rest, however, but began to try and convince these legislators that they should vote for him for U.S. Senator. At that time, U.S. Senators were elected by state legislatures rather than by popular vote.

"Clark was making no attempt to hide the fact that large amounts of money were available if you voted for him," says Dr. Toole. Clark was so bold in his bribery, in fact, that the first thing the legislature did when it met in January 1899, was call for a report from its Bribery Committee. A state senator from Flathead County, Fred Whiteside, stood up and "waved a huge pile of money and said that this money had been given to him by an agent of William Andrews Clark," says Dr. Toole. "Pandemonium, of course, broke loose at this." The headlines roared, and Clark managed only three votes in the House and four in the Senate. But he was far from finished. It was only the first ballot.

By the eighteenth ballot, Clark had spent over $400,000 bribing Montana legislators. Forty-seven votes were bought in 18 days, and Clark was finally elected to his coveted seat in the United States Senate.

However, shortly after his election, Clark made the mistake of saying in a speech that the $30,000 that State Senator Whiteside turned in was actually Daly's money. Daly was incensed. He took the matter to Washington, D.C. Thomas H. Carter, the former territorial delegate who had defeated Clark in 1888, was now the other U.S. Senator from Montana. In December 1899, Senator Carter asked the U.S. Senate to investigate Clark's election and declare it void.

By mid-April the U.S. Senate's Committee on Privileges and Elections had heard testimony from many Montana legislators and had even demanded to look at their bank accounts. Dr. Toole tells us that they all came up with one story when asked why they had arrived in Helena broke and left after the legislative session rich. They had improved their bank accounts, they said, by playing poker. The U.S. Senate Committee unanimously recommended that the entire U.S. Senate pass a resolution declaring William A. Clark's Senate seat void. Clark resigned five days later.

Even then, Clark wouldn't let the matter die. Dr. Toole says that, with his son's help in Helena, Clark maneuvered Governor Robert D. Smith, a Daly man, into leaving the state. Lieutenant Governor A.E. Spriggs rushed back to Helena from a convention in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and reappointed Clark to the U.S. Senate seat he had just resigned.

When Governor Smith heard about this in San Francisco, he rushed back to Montana, saying, "I did not believe Lieutenant Governor Spriggs or any other sane man would appoint Clark."

Clark's relentless ambition wouldn't let him leave the matter alone again. An ordinary man would have returned home in humiliation and defeat. But not W.A. Clark. He worked feverishly to elect a sympathetic legislature in Montana's next state election (1900). Daly, who was laid up in his hotel suite in New York City close to death, couldn't fire up his political machine enough to frustrate Clark one more time. In 1901 Montana's legislature elected Clark to a six-year term as U.S. Senator where, Dr. Toole tells us, "he served a full term without distinction."

A week after Clark was elected, Marcus Daly died in New York at the age of 58. The war was over.

> *There was always a question in my mind as to whether or not Daly knew that he had lost the last and bitterest fight of the feud. The answer is that he did. With him in the room at the Netherlands Hotel was the man who would become the president of the Anaconda Company, a man by the name of William Scallon. Mr. Scallon lived to be a very, very old man, and I interviewed him in the Montana Club in Helena in 1947. And he told me that he felt it encumbent on him to tell Daly that Clark had won the election. I asked him what Mr. Daly's reaction was, and he said Daly simply turned his face to the wall.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In some respects a novelist couldn't have imagined the twists and turns of Montana's plot during the final decade of the 19th century. Professor Toole's objectives in this lecture are to point out the progressively worsening election situation during this time. Viewers should take note of the extent to which votes were less important than the ambitions of Montana's powerful. Professor Toole describes three battles between Marcus Daly and William Clark, the "copper kings," and he leaves to his viewers the ultimate judgment, right or wrong.

BEFORE VIEWING

Professor Toole's lecture is almost exclusively concerned with Montana politics and ethics in the 1890s. Between them, Daly and Clark spent $1.5 million on an election to determine Montana's capital city. Would it be ethical for two wealthy industrialists to spend $12 million in today's money (equivalent price) on an election for a new capital? state symbol? song?

When State Senator Fred Whiteside held up the $30,000 he said he had received as a bribe from one of Clark's agents, he was passing up a huge amount of money – $240,000 in today's dollars. Clark, if he were bribing people today, would need $3.6 million to equal the amount he spent in 1899. Viewers may want to read chapters 10 and 11 of C.B. Connolly's book, *The Devil Learns to Vote.* Connolly analyzed the U.S. Senate committee's records, and he names many of the Montana legislators who profited by voting for William Clark.

Finally, there is a question of why Clark wanted to serve as Montana's representative in Washington, D.C. At this time, he was making more than a million dollars a month from just one of his Butte mines, and he owned dozens both in Montana and other states. Was it respectability he wanted?

Why would a man seeking respectability risk such intense humiliation both within the state and throughout the nation?

TEXT: Toole, *Montana: An Uncommon Land,* pp. 186-194.

WHILE VIEWING

This lecture has several minor themes. Dr. Toole mentions newspapers as the vocal chords of the powerful. This will get even worse. There were, at this time, a few independent newspapers in the state. Although most took the viewpoint of their benefactors, some cried with their own anguish at the political chicanery. Dr. Toole chronicles some of the competing headlines for us.

He also makes the point that U.S. Senators were not elected by popular vote until 1913. Thus, Montana's legislature appointed Clark after 18 ballots.

Both Daly and Clark lied to the Senate committee. Clark refused to admit any knowledge of his briberies, and Daly denied having hired detectives to investigate Clark's doings. Dr. Toole tells us that Daly went so far as to hire detectives to steal Clark's mail, steam it open, copy the contents, and reseal the letters for delivery.

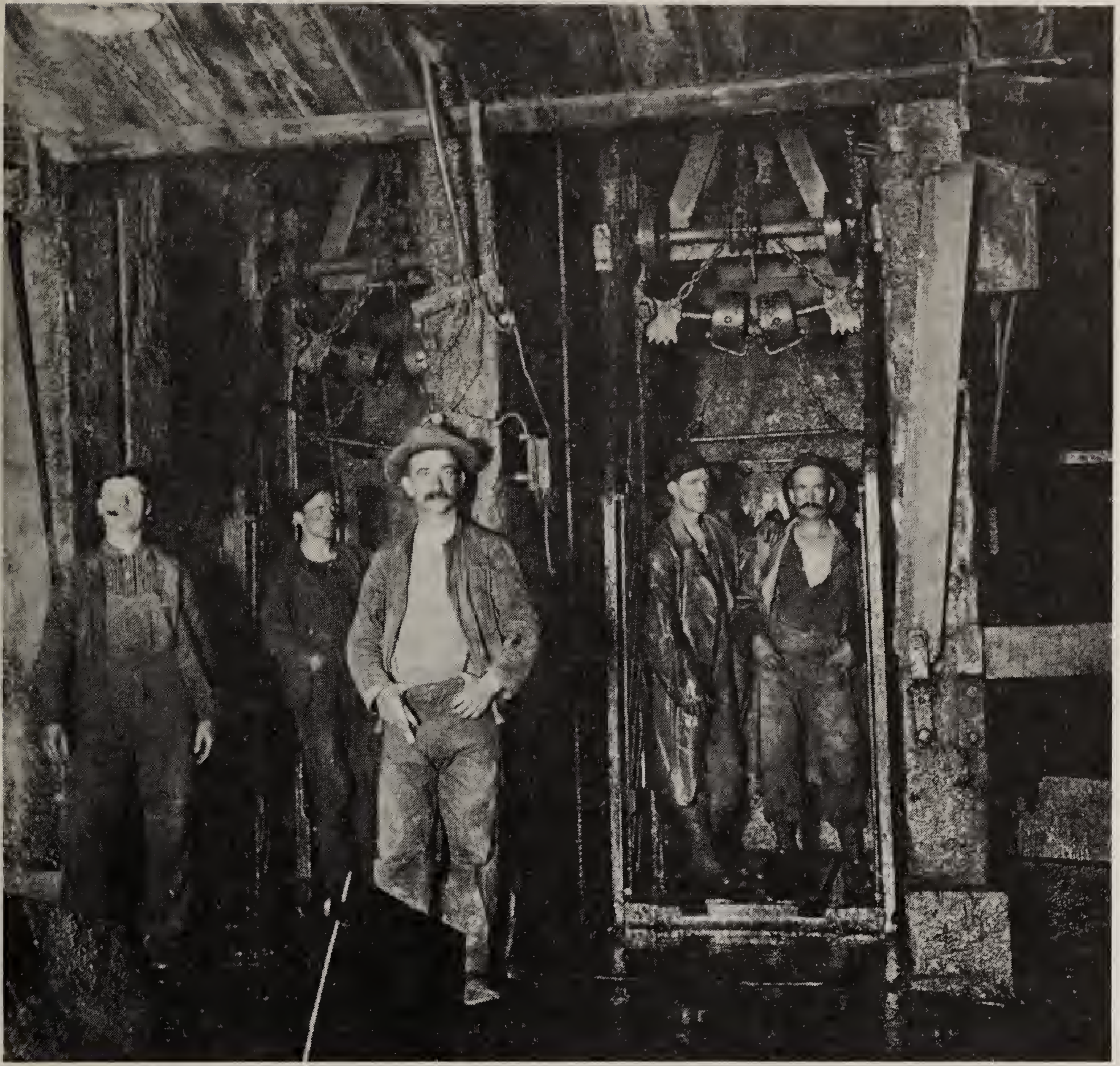
AFTER VIEWING

Copies of the state's newspapers are available through the Montana Historical Society in Helena and through many local or college libraries (ask your librarian). While reading newspaper reports is an interesting dive into historical waters any time, the headlines are particularly relevant during each skirmish of the copper king war. The Anaconda *Standard* was Daly's mouthpiece. The Butte *Miner* was Clark's. The Great Falls *Tribune* and the Miles City *Star* were independent voices, as were the Butte *Intermountain* and the Townsend *Star.*

BACKGROUND NOTES

Viewers may get the impression that everyone involved in Montana politics during these dark, dishonest days was crooked. This was not true. In fact, the honest voices sound even louder to our modern ears when we realize the depths of dishonesty of the times.

Dr. Toole quotes Wilbur F. Sanders, a courageous and honest man since the days of the vigilantes. Sanders said in a letter to a friend, "It is a dull vision that does not see great changes in Montana. In our politics it is not thought necessary that legislators should comprehend the principles of government...I desire representatives who in the legislative assembly could not be hoodwinked or bribed...but the weaklings are not of that quality."



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Underground station at the 1600-foot level in a Butte mine. As the corporate giants battled over matters of power, prices, politics, and pride, the copper industry grew from the sweat of the smeltermen and the miners who worked the elaborate maze underlying "the richest hill on earth." Many were immigrants from Ireland, England, Germany, Italy, Finland, the Slavic states, China, and other countries. They made Butte-Anaconda a melting pot of cultures and left a lasting imprint on the state.

State Senator Fred Whiteside stood up in front of a joint assembly of the Montana legislature and said, "I know that the course I have pursued will not be popular; but, so long as I live, I propose to fight the men who have placed the withering curse of bribery upon this state. I had rather go back to the carpenter's bench where I learned my trade and spend the rest of my days in toil and obscurity and be able to hold my head erect and look the world in the face than to be a silent party to the knowledge of this crime."

E.D. Matts of Deer Lodge County said, "I am sorry to see that flag in its place. It would be better to put in its place the red flag of the auction-block...This story will be spread over the world, and the honor, the integrity, and the credit of the state must be disgraced by such investigation."

The Speaker of the House, Henry C. Stiff, said,, "I know this much: the only reason that I myself am not casting my vote under a bribe is because I refused to accept it – more money than I ever expect to have. All the millions that W.A. Clark possesses, in the face of this fact, could not induce me to cast my ballot for him."

Overall, Clark spent $400,000 to bribe the legislature into electing him U.S. Senator. Forty-seven votes had been bought in 18 days. Clark added another $30,000 to his final bill the night after his successful ballot. It was the cost of the champagne he bought for his "victory" celebration.

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It was an interesting election because it broke a record in the United States for, I suppose, what you would call 'civic duty'. There were 51,500 registered voters in Montana, and 55,000 voters voted.

LECTURE 13

THE AMALGAMATED COPPER TRUST

> *Montana has had a homegrown corporation up until now. Granted it had enormous power. Granted that it messed up the state in many respects. Granted that by direction and indirection it had been corrupt. It was still a Montana corporation. Marcus Daly was still a Montanan. It was our corruption. It was our own company. Now it is not. It is Standard Oil's.*

BY 1900, THE ANNUAL OUTPUT OF Butte's refined metals—mainly copper, but also zinc, lead, silver, and gold—was worth more than $50 million. It was the largest copper mine in the world, and unlike earlier times, Butte was supremely attractive to out-of-state investors.

Dr. Toole begins his fifth lecture in his early Butte series by pointing out two developments of importance. First, with the death of George Hearst in 1891, the Anaconda Company became an open company. Boston investors, the same ones who tried so hard during the Montana-Michigan Price War to squelch Butte's emergence as a copper mining power, now purchased a large share of the Anaconda Company's stocks.

Second, the Standard Oil Company, an experienced hand at monopoly ownership in the oil field, now saw opportunities in Butte and began to muscle its way into the copper mining scene. With the passing of a bill in the 1899 Montana legislature liberalizing corporate takeovers in the state, Standard Oil was ready to move. Using its tremendous depth of capital, it began to buy up the Boston investors. "They paid $36 million for the first Boston property," Dr. Toole says, "but they issued the stock under the name of Amalgamated to the tune of $80 million. There is a $44-million profit here."

An unscrupulous financial giant, in other words, has changed the nature of the game. No longer is the corruption limited to Montana alone. Without changing the value of the natural resources underground in Butte, without investing in superior equipment and new, more efficient technologies, Standard Oil reaps tremendous profits by manipulating the New York Stock Exchange.

"We're dealing here with a lot of power," Dr. Toole says, "and a lot of money, and it has moved right in. The center of activity is Butte, Montana." He quotes newspapers of the time to suggest that not only did Montanans not know about these crooked dealings, they didn't care what was going on in New York. Dr. Toole suggests that this—the takeover of the Amalgamated and the indifference of the natives – was a tragic blow to Montanans' rights to control their own destiny. They had lost their power of the vote through the bribery of a powerful few, and now the economic well-being of the entire state was controlled by the machinations of Standard Oil.

At the same time, Butte residents watched one of their own, F. Augustus Heinze, work his way up from a $5-a-day surveyor's job to challenge the power of the Standard Oil Company. "Fritz" Heinze was "a gay, handsome, industrial desperado and demigogue – the most adept pirate in the history of American corporate privateering," or so Dr. Toole quotes Joseph Kinsey Howard. Dr. Toole says Heinze was "as crooked as a corkscrew."

Hated in the boardrooms of Standard Oil in New York, Heinze was celebrated in Butte, even among the majority who took home Amalgamated paychecks every two weeks.

Heinze didn't bother with elective office himself. Nor did he try to bribe Montana's legislature as William Clark had. Heinze used Butte's district court judges, Judge William Clancy and Judge Edward Harney, to get his way. He also shrewdly manipulated a vague federal law, the "apex law," to steal valuable copper ore from Amalgamated's claims.

"What the law really says," Dr. Toole tells us, "is that if a vein of ore apexes, or breaks the surface on your surface claim, you can follow that vein wherever it goes. So what Heinze did was file a little claim smack dab in the middle of Amalgamated's property." He began "stealing them blind."

When Amalgamated went to court to stop this thievery, the company encountered Heinze's judges, who ruled almost without exception in Heinze's favor. Chaos erupted. Montana went native again. Heinze's miners began fighting Amalgamated's miners beneath the streets of Butte. But Heinze's popularity didn't suffer. After Marcus Daly died in November 1900, Heinze became the new hero. Montanans liked his approach.

Heinze had a staff of 37 attorneys involved in 100 lawsuits. Fourteen cases reached the U.S. Supreme Court. He was spending $1 million a year in attorneys' fees, and the "Apex War," the final battle in the War of the Copper Kings, lasted 10 years.

Standard Oil suffered these indignities as long as it could. Frustrated in its attempts to seek redress in Butte's courts, frustrated that its miners were more loyal to the interloper, Heinze, than they were to the company that paid them, Standard Oil finally acted. When Judge Clancy declared that Amalgamated was an illegal trust in Montana, it was the final straw. On October 2, 1903, the company announced the complete shutdown of its enterprises in Montana. If Montanans had been indifferent before, they now saw instant documentation of the power of Standard Oil in Montana. Four-fifths (30,000) of Montana's workers were immediately thrown out of work. There was total paralysis. "Butte on Verge of Desperation," read the headlines.

Angry crowds took to the street. Worried about a riot, the mayor of Butte closed down the saloons and the red light district. Three days passed.

The newspapers owned by Amalgamated turned against Heinze with a vengeance. He was responsible for the shutdown. One of the few truly independent papers in the state, the Lewistown *Democrat,* saw it differently. "Let us be thankful that Fergus County is not in the coils of the Anaconda monster," it said. But four-fifths of the state was.

Heinze valiantly used his final ace-in-the-hole – his powers of persuasion.

He stood up on the steps of the Butte courthouse at 4 p.m. three days after Amalgamated shut down. In front of 10,000 citizens threatened with an entire winter without support, he launched into one final flourish. "The Amalgamated Copper Company is the greatest menace that any community could possibly have within its boundaries," he said. "These people are my enemies—fierce, bitter, implacable. But they are your enemies, too. If they crush me today, they will crush you tomorrow. They will force you to dwell in Standard Oil houses while you live, and they will bury you in Standard Oil coffins when you die."

It was the urbane upstart's final hurrah. The people listening in the autumn chill of the Butte street forgot about their dire straits. They cheered their local giant killer in his battle with the distant Goliath. But their exhilaration was shallow and washed away like gravel in a sluice box.

Amalgamated wanted action. It wanted a special session of the Montana legislature to pass a "fair trials bill" that allowed either party in a civil suit to change the proceedings to another court if he considered the judge prejudiced. On November 10, Governor Joseph K. Toole called the special session; the legislature passed the bill, and Heinze's leghold on the Goliath, Standard Oil, was broken forever.

Two years later, on February 14, 1906, Amalgamated bought out Heinze for $10.5 million. Many historians consider this vast sum a reflection of Heinze's nuisance value rather than the worth of his Butte properties. "Fritz" Heinze went to New York to take on Standard Oil in its own backyard. By 1914, however, his money was gone, his marriage to a beautiful and famous New York actress had ended in divorce, and he died of cirrhosis of the liver.

> *The Anaconda Company was a great company. There is no parallel to the viciousness. There is no parallel for the callousness. There is no excuse for this thing that happens beginning in 1903. And it is going to happen again, the threat to shut down. Murder is going to take place. This is a story unparalleled for its viciousness in any other state in the Union.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Dr. Toole narrates the story of the Standard Oil Company's gradual rise to power in Montana. Previous attempts to control the market for copper had failed, but this one succeeded. Dr. Toole also tells about Butte's third "copper king," F. Augustus Heinze. By the end of 1903, the fortunes of the entire state of Montana were entwined with those of the Standard Oil magnates. He infers that the consequences were profound. Montana's press is now "a captive press," and four-fifths of the state's wage earners are dependent on the Amalgamated Copper Company.

BEFORE VIEWING

As Dr. Toole mentions, until 1891 when George Hearst died, the Anaconda Company was a "closed company." Only a few investors put up the money to develop the Anaconda's mining claims, and only a few reaped the profits. When the company became an "open company," its stocks were put up for sale on the New York Stock Exchange. After a brief period of changing ownership, the majority of the stocks were purchased from Marcus Daly by Standard Oil. Standard Oil then created the Amalgamated Copper Company and put its stocks up for sale. Viewers may want to review their knowledge of stock trading before Professor Toole's discussion of Standard Oil's stock "watering" of Amalgamated.

Also, it may be necessary to review the ethics of "Fritz" Heinze. He had a crafty brilliance not limited by a sense of morality. Is this ever justifiable? He was shrewd enough to know that the apex law could be manipulated to his advantage. Does that make it right?

For instance, Heinze reviewed old claims and found a triangular sliver of land, 75 feet by 10 feet across its base. This piece just happened to separate three of the richest Amalgamated mines – the Anaconda, the St. Lawrence, and the Neversweat. Heinze claimed that all three (!) apexed on the orphaned triangle that he had bought. Tongue in cheek, he named it "the copper trust." While the lawyers argued the case in Butte's district court and then in the appeals courts, Heinze savaged Amalgamated's claims. In other words, he had used the complexity and vagueness of the law to steal copper ore. Was this right?

When at one point a federal judge prohibited him from mining his Rarus Mine until the apex law confusion was cleared up, Heinze formed a "puppet company," which systematically looted Amalgamated's Michael Davitt Mine next door for $1 million in ore. His argument was that since he was the only one to fight the behemoth, Standard Oil, he needed to fight as dirty as it did. What do you think?

WHILE VIEWING

Some clarifications and definitions may be necessary in this lecture. First, after Standard Oil bought the Anaconda Company, it created a *holding company* called the Amalgamated Copper Company. With few exceptions, all three names – Standard Oil, Anaconda, and Amalgamated – refer to the same company.

A *trust* is a company that controls the commerce of a number of established companies seemingly operated independently. Often, a trust is strong enough to control prices by suppressing competition. Dr. Toole calls Standard Oil a trust.

A *demagogue* is a person who has perfected the art of public speaking to be very persuasive. This is a person very skilled at propaganda. Dr. Toole quotes Joseph Kinsey Howard, who calls Heinze a demagogue.

The *apex law* was part of the federal mining law of 1872. Under this law, a mining claim constituted a surface area of 1,500 feet by 600 feet. If a vein of mineral ore broke the surface of the earth on a claim, the apex law said that the locator of that claim could follow the ore any distance underground as long as he remained within the 1,500-feet *length* of his claim. There was no restriction on the lateral (width) variation underground. In Butte, a thousand feet underground, things turned into a jumble of upthrusts and sudden rich veins. The law was vague and confusing. In other places, investors would buy up the surrounding territory so that there was no possible confusion. In Butte it was the perfect law for an unscrupulous opportunist like Heinze.

AFTER VIEWING

Professor Toole, whose expertise was in economic and political history, does not have the time to tell us the stories about the lives of the common man in Butte and the state as a whole. One of the most fantastic is that of Jim Ledford.

Ledford was an unpretentious man who, by chance, discovered a leaching process which added countless millions to the copper production of Butte and the world. Water pumped from the Anaconda Mine ran through his backyard. Polluted with copper sulfate, it was unsuitable for irrigation or any other purpose. Ledford just happened to have a junk heap of tin cans through which the water ran. One morning he noticed that most of the junk had disappeared and, in its place, was a heavy deposit of copper. The tin had bonded with the sulphur in a chemical reaction. The copper was freed, and it was 98 percent pure. Ledford promptly made a contract for all the water that ran from the Anaconda Mine. He made $90,000 the first year.

Butte was and is a unique city. Viewers may want to research some of the stories which have come from that rich human environment.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Butte could watch its richest citizen denied a seat in Congress because of bribery and then return that same citizen to the Senate two years later. It would watch with indifference as Marcus Daly passed his ownership of "the richest hill on earth" to the greatest trust on earth. It could rally around F. Augustus Heinze as he denounced the Standard Oil Company's attempt to take over the state, and then lobby its assembly to pass the bill that would sabotage Heinze's power to frustrate the company's ultimate dominance.

Heinze fit into the Clark-Daly mold when he arrived in Butte, an ambitious 20-year-old, in 1889. He had just graduated from Columbia University's School of Mining. He worked in Butte for two years and became familiar with the geology and politics of the Boston and Montana Copper Company, his employer. Then he returned to New York as an assistant editor for the *Engineering and Mining Journal.* He also went to Germany to study modern ore smelting techniques.

With the proper schooling, good contacts, and some practical training, he returned to Butte to purchase the Rarus Mine, the mine right next door to his former employer's Michael Davitt Mine. When the apex law dispute broke out soon thereafter, Heinze went to Boston to meet face to face with A.S. Bigelow, the president of the Boston and Montana Copper Company.

Bigelow swept Heinze's charts and maps and theories from his desk and told him boldly to get his miners out of the Boston and Montana's ore bodies in Butte. Heinze told Bigelow that he was prepared to fight. "Before you and I have finished," he told Bigelow, "I will give you a fight that will be heard from one end of this continent to the other." Heinze, the newest copper king, had come of age, and the "Apex War" would last 10 years before Bigelow's successor, the Standard Oil Company, would buy Heinze out for $10.5 million.

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I have said repeatedly to the point of utter tedium that Montanans almost never know why what is happening to them happens to them. Again, let me quote the Butte Intermountain, *a pretty good newspaper. It said when this was all revealed, 'After all, trusts and combinations of capital will not change the conditions that now exist insofar as questions of personal independence are concerned, but merely enlarge the army of employees under one management.' That might come under the heading: Famous last words.*

LECTURE 14

THERE'S LONGHORNS IN THEM HILLS

This is the so-called 'hard winter' of 1886 and '87. Many of the ranchers indeed lost three-quarters of their herds. It was a catastrophe of enormous proportions, and one has to ask why.

"WE MARKETED SOME MAGNIFICENT cattle," Conrad Kohrs of Deer Lodge wrote in 1874. "My native three-year-olds usually weighed 1,300 to 1,350 pounds on the Chicago market, far outweighing a triple-wintered Texan." Cattle buyers from Chicago were buying cows in Deer Lodge, Montana Territory, for $18 to $22.50 a head. At a time before either Marcus Daly or the railroads had entered the state, Montana's cattle ranches were already earning their reputations back East.

"All of the flocks and herds in the world could find ample pasturage on the unoccupied plains and the mountain slopes beyond," wrote General James S. Brisbin about Montana in his 1881 book, *The Beef Bonanza or How to Get Rich on the Plains.* The rush to Montana in the 1860s, '70s, and '80s was not limited to locating placer gold mines. A parallel rush to the "open range" became, as we all know, the stuff of legends.

Toole now turns his attention to eastern Montana and its development. In many ways the pattern was the same: boom and bust.

"The cattle industry in Montana is much older than most people believe," he begins. Traders had driven cattle to the Green River (Wyoming) rendezvous just south of Montana in 1830. Many of the West's military forts also kept herds of cattle. Father DeSmet brought 46 head to St. Mary's Mission in 1846. But it wasn't until the 1850s and '60s that cattle herds became truly established in our state.

In the late 1850s, Richard Grant brought 600 head into Montana from southern Idaho. Granville Stuart, of Gold Creek fame, also brought cows to western Montana. In February 1857, the elders of the Mormon Church in Utah passed an edict ordering all Gentiles out of Mormon territory. What is called "the Mormon War of 1857-1858" sent non-Mormon settlers scurrying north into Montana and brought out the U.S. Army to keep the peace. In 1858 General Albert Sidney Johnson bought 300 head at $10 a hundredweight from ranchers in Deer Lodge, Montana.

When Nelson Story drove a herd of 600 longhorns from Dallas, Texas, to Montana's Gallatin Valley in 1866, the final bricks in the industry's foundation were laid. As miners set up their "cities," western Montana ranchers were there to supply their need for beef. It was no wonder. A poor, worndown ox might bring $100 in gold dust in Virginia City. Butchers there were fetching 25 cents a pound for their stringy beef.

By 1868 the nine counties in Montana reported almost 19,000 cows and calves. In 1871 a prize Durham bull brought $1,885 at a Helena auction. The Montana legislature exempted all thoroughbred cattle from taxation for one year after their arrival. The first Montana Territory brands were published in 1872. Miles City was founded in 1877, and it is estimated that by 1879 over 100,000 longhorns a year were pouring into Montana's plains.

"Montana grass—native grass or bunchgrass or buffalo grass or any of its various names—was, in Montana, very considerably superior to the grass in Wyoming, Colorado, or anywhere else in the North American continent. It was beautiful," says Dr. Toole.

"In the '70s and early '80s, you begin to see that since the mountain valleys of the West are filling up, [there is] a spilling over of these cattle into central Montana and subsequently into eastern Montana," says Dr. Toole.

"In 1880," Granville Stuart wrote in his memoirs, "the country [central Montana] was practically uninhabited. One could travel for miles without seeing so much as a trapper's bivouac. In the fall of 1883, there was not a buffalo remaining on the range and the antelope, elk, and deer were indeed scarce. In 1880, no one had heard tell of a cowboy...but in the fall of 1883, there were 600,000 head of cattle on the range. The cowboy...had become an institution."

The speed of the development of the prairies, in other words, rivaled that of the placer mines and "the richest hill on earth" in Butte.

Spurred on by writings of people like General Brisbin (quoted above), a flood of investors stepped forward. Much of the money came from the East or from Europe. Some herds totalled nearly 100,000 cattle. These were the days of the "customary range." There were few fences, and all a stockman had to do to acquire a portion of this "limitless" grassland was insert a notice in the nearest newspaper listing his brand and establishing the borders of his range. "These cattlemen did not buy the land on which they were running the cattle," Dr. Toole tells us. "They didn't even homestead it. It's public domain, and it costs them not one cent. That's why it was so enormously profitable."

There were two roundups every year, Dr. Toole says. Each rancher sent out his cowboys; they divided into crews and fanned out to cover the entire area. The cows (as many as 12,000-15,000 animals) were then brought to an agreed-upon spot. In the spring they branded all the calves, and in the fall they cut out those to be sent to market. "This is the era of the cowboy," says Dr. Toole.

But there were problems. The massacre of the buffalo herds left the plains littered with carcasses, which spawned an explosion of the wolf population. The territorial government began offering bounties on wolf hides.

There also were rustlers around, and the winters could be brutal, particularly on those cows newly arrived from the Texas Panhandle. Prairie fires, some set by cattle thieves as diversions, roared 40 to 50 miles per hour through the plains. Historians tell us that a 10 percent annual loss was "normal" in Montana. And, by 1883, those losses were mounting.

A vigilance committee organized by Granville Stuart and called "the Stranglers" checked the growing rustler problem, but other problems couldn't be solved by quick solutions. Montana's enormous grasslands became crowded. By fall 1886 the range was in bad shape, Dr. Toole says. The supply going to Chicago outweighed the demand, and prices fell. Montana stockmen made the tragic mistake of overwintering their entire herds to wait for prices to rise.

"When the plains became crowded," Granville Stuart wrote later, "the range business was no longer a reasonably safe business; it was from this time on a gamble, with the trump cards in the hands of the elements."

The elements – the weather – turned especially nasty. The first snowstorms hit in early November 1886 and continued all month. A chinook welcomed December but the thermometer plummeted, and the slush froze over what grass was left. On January 9, 1887, it snowed for 16 hours, an inch an hour. It stayed below -20 degrees for 10 days, and a second blizzard, worse than the first, struck on January 28. The temperature dropped to almost 60 below.

Two wealthy cattlemen living in Helena wrote to their foreman in the Judith Basin to ask about their herd. The foreman tossed the letter to a young cowboy. "Got a postcard?" the cowboy asked. He was Charlie Russell, and he sketched a watercolor of a gaunt steer, legs buckling in the thick drift, a coyote watching nearby. "Last of Five Thousand," Russell wrote underneath.

Indeed the losses were staggering. One historian estimated that 362,000 cattle worth $20 million died. The large operations went bankrupt. Carcasses were found piled in coolies and along drift fences. Fifty to 75 percent of the herds were destroyed. The land had been asked to do more than it could do. Here marked the death of the open range.

Dr. Toole tells us it happened because of "the fragility of the land. Because, though the Great Plains looks tough, flat, and ugly, it isn't. It is extremely fragile, and we simply pumped more cattle onto the land than it could sustain. We abused the land. We destroyed a good deal of it, and it has never returned."

After that winter, the herds were smaller, there were fences, and the foreign speculators stayed out of the market. "The cowboy," says Dr. Toole, "becomes an irrigator, a fence fixer, a little bit later a tractor driver, and jack-of-all-trades."

In the final five minutes of his lecture, Dr. Toole lays some groundwork for the boom that comes right on the heels of the cattle industry bust: the homesteader boom. "Eighty thousand people in a very short time flooded onto this enormously delicate land and began to plow it up," he says.

There was a great push – an advertising push – to convince Americans and immigrants to this country to settle in Montana. It was coincidental that Montana's weather cooperated. The rains came at the right time, the price of wheat was up, and the new residents encouraged others to follow.

In 1909 Congress passed the Enlarged Homestead Act, which increased the allotment of land from 160 acres to 320 acres. In 1910 homesteaders filed on and occupied almost five million acres of Montana land. In his next lecture, Dr. Toole will describe how this castle-in-the-sand collapsed.

The cyclical nature of drought has been true for at least 3,000 years. We persist to this day to think that drought is an aberration, that the norm is the

> *wet period. Not so. Drought is as inherent in the Great Plains in eastern and central Montana as are the wet periods. We don't seem to understand that and, not understanding that, we constantly come a cropper.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

There were only 30 years of open range cattle ranching in Montana. During this time, the nation's best grasslands underwent abrupt change. Gone were the buffalo, and in their place came herds of cattle. The plains that on first glance appeared so limitless proved fragile. When suddenly overgrazed and stressed by drought and an unusually savage winter, the Montana grasslands turned killer. Though kept alive through myth, the days of the open range and the cowboy had changed forever, and central and eastern Montana gave itself up to the new depredations brought by the honyockers, the homesteaders.

BEFORE VIEWING

There's no doubt about it. Cowboying meant hard work for little reward. Still does. Why is it, then, that it became such an important part of our history? Still is. Why did cowboys endure all the hardships of the Montana roundups twice a year? What were the "abstract" rewards? And, more importantly, why did this relatively short period of American history achieve such prominence in our books, novels, movies, and television shows?

Toole spends little time talking about the cowboy myth. Like Detective Friday on the old *Dragnet* TV show, he wants just the facts, ma'am. He covers a lot of ground in his lecture, nevertheless, and he must restrict himself only to this era's historical terms. But that doesn't mean that we, the viewers, can't enter this important subject by way of its myths. Above all the other characters and heroes of our history, why has the cowboy been crowned king of the American story? His may be a drama of classical proportions: man alone on the open range, separated from the protections of society. Here we have an epic, a saga of travel and multiple difficulties. Here is a list of truly profound conflicts: the weather, wild predators, rustlers, Indian country...I'm sure you can continue the list.

TEXT: Toole, *Montana: An Uncommon Land,* pp. 140-154.

WHILE VIEWING

As we have repeatedly mentioned, K. Ross Toole is not a detached historian. It is more important for him to interpret the lessons of a particular era of Montana's past than it is to tell its story objectively. This is especially true when he talks about Montana's natural resources and their mismanagement in the past. Here he is talking about Montana's native grasslands.

One of the characteristics viewers should watch in this lecture is Professor Toole's frustration when he sees the mistakes of the past repeated at a late date. "The drought is cyclical," he says. It is a phenomenon in the Great Plains that was not, and perhaps is still not recognized.

As viewers, we may want to isolate Professor Toole, the historian. As you may or may not know, Toole was dying of lung cancer at the time he delivered these lectures. They represent in a very real way his legacy to the state. It may be important that we learn the wisdom of our elders in the old-fashioned sense while watching Dr. Toole speak. This is one man speaking, one scholar's passionate defense of the land. In that sense, Toole's frustrations with the repetitions of abuse in the plains should become our own.

AFTER VIEWING

Because so broad a subject is covered in so little time, there is enormous potential for independent study and extra-credit assignments. Students may want to research any of these tangents: When did irrigation begin to play a role in cattle ranching? When did ranchers start haying, planting alfalfa, and other grasses? Who put up the fences? Why didn't the federal government charge grazing fees like it does today? Are those fees fair today? What part did women play in the roundups, the cattle drives, the saga of the open range? What part did native Americans play? Were there any black cowboys? When was the first water right filed, the first brand, the first thoroughbred cow registered in your county? Where were the centers of the industry? Why not do a report on Granville Stuart's memoirs? How about other cowboys' diaries? Where did the language of the cowboy—grubstake, dogies, rodeo, rustler, etc.—come from? What was the first Western novel? movie? TV show? How have these dramas changed? Do they reflect the growth and changes of American culture?

Also, a visit to your county's oldest cattle ranch or to the Grant Kohrs National Historical Monument in the Deer Lodge Valley may be of interest. Why not invite the senior rancher in your county to class one day? Why not call the Education Department of the Montana Historical Society in Helena or the Montana Woolgrowers or the Stockgrowers Association (the Stockgrowers celebrated their Montana centennial in 1984) for a guest speaker?

BACKGROUND NOTES

Cattle were important, but so were sheep. At one time, Montana raised more sheep and produced more wool than any other state. There were sheep at St. Ignatius in 1857, at Fort Owen in 1862. Four hundred head grazed at the Kohrs Ranch by 1863, and 1,500 head entered the Beaverhead Valley from Oregon in 1869. By 1878 wool growing was a $1-million-a-year industry, and the harvest of 1880 was over 1.3 million pounds. This production doubled by 1890. Indeed, the golden era for the sheepmen occurred in the 1890s. But the industry declined, as did the cattle industry, during the homesteader period just after the turn of the century.

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What I'm driving at, you already know. Starting about 1900, an enormous number of people flooded into eastern and central Montana. We have come to call them honyockers. We don't really know the origin of the word. We called them 'nesters,' 'scissorbills,' what have you, but what they were, of course, were homesteaders. They were filing on public domain [land]. Eighty thousand people, in a very short time, flooded onto this enormously delicate land and began to plow it up in 160- to 320-acre plots. There was a series of fortuitous circumstances, and fortuitous doesn't mean lucky; it simply means accidental. These circumstances came together to bring about the tragedy of this particular boom and bust.

LECTURE 15

THE FARMING FRONTIER

It was, therefore, a miserable kind of life. Why then were they sticking with it? Number one, they were sticking with it because most of them were extraordinarily tough men and women. Just plain tough. Secondly, they stuck with it because actually there was a reason for real hope. This was the wet period. The second season, the third season, they were growing magnificent wheat, and the price of that wheat, especially after war started in Europe, was very, very good. So they had all kinds of reasons to hope.

BY 1885 PRACTICALLY ALL THE LAND EAST of the Mississippi River was fully settled. The frontier there was gone. In contrast, Montana was still wide open. It had only a few permanent settlements east of its huge lumbering and mining districts in the west.

By 1900 Montana's population reached 243,000. Butte was the crowned king by virtue of its mineral wealth, the jobs it provided, and its bulk of 30,470 persons. Only nine other "cities" boasted populations of more than 2,500 people. According to the U.S. Census, Montana was still considered a frontier because it had less than two persons per square mile of territory.

In 1905, 56 million acres of U.S. government-owned land was unreserved and unoccupied in the Northern Plains. Almost 75 percent of that land lay in Montana east of the mountains. Here was the incentive to the homesteaders, the "honyockers"—free land! Into this remote and tough land came 80,000 homesteaders, says Dr. Toole. Between 1900 and 1920, Montana's population doubled to just over 500,000 people. Why did they come in such numbers in such a short time?

The first reason, as Dr. Toole mentioned at the end of his previous lecture, was that the U.S. Congress wanted to give away public lands. Three main laws promulgated this policy. The original one, the Homestead Act of 1862, provided the farmer with 160 acres, free but for a filing fee. It had little effect in Montana. Though the first homesteader on record, David Carpenter, came to claim his 160 acres on August 1, 1868, he was one of only a few who considered 160 acres enough to make a living in semiarid central and eastern Montana.

The Desert Land Act of a few years later (1877) offered a full 640-acre section for 25 cents an acre as long as the homesteader agreed to irrigate part of the land. After three years, when he proved he had irrigated the land, it became his for another dollar an acre. The measure benefitted the stockman more than the farmer, who could rarely afford irrigation costs by himself.

At the urging of Montana's Senator Joseph M. Dixon, Congress passed the Enlarged Homestead Act in 1909. It set the acreage at 320 acres and allowed the farmer three years to "prove" the land.

The second reason that people flooded into Montana's drylands was because of the "railroad colonization program." James Hill, the builder of the Great Northern Railway, loved the Northwest but hated to see empty boxcars. Hill, Dr. Toole says, "was an empire builder. He wasn't merely interested in building and maintaining a railroad and making money. He wanted to see some 8,000 farms where there were only 150 huge ranches."

The Great Northern and other railroads staged an elaborate, if somewhat exaggerated campaign to convince people that Montana's drylands were a desert waiting to bloom. It was the largest advertising campaign the railroads had ever undertaken. They created special homesteader rates of passage: $22.50 from St. Paul to Miles City, $30 from St. Louis; and you could rent an entire boxcar for your belongings and livestock for only $50. Not only did potential new settlers hear about free land, they also got to see demonstration trains filled with wheat grown in the desert and filled with promotional literature. Farmers in semiarid country, said the pamphlets, "can grow better average crops than they are growing in Illinois today because we can secure the ideal condition, and control it, and they cannot do it in Illinois because they have too much rain."

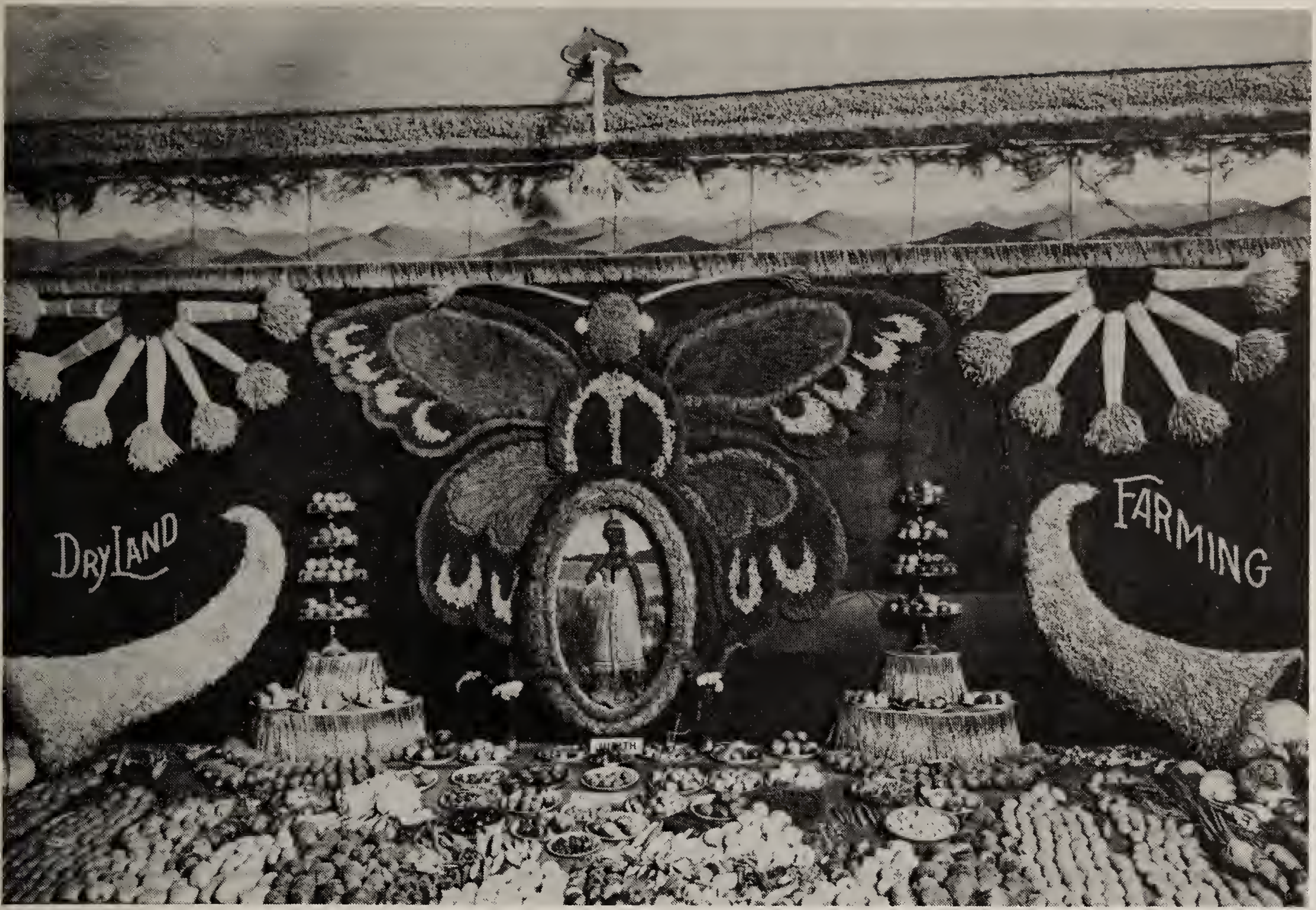
The third reason was scientific. Soil experts like Hardy Webster Campbell and Thomas Shaw were funded by the railroads to preach the potentials of the dryland methods of farming. They wrote brochures, started magazines and books. The average rainfall, said some of the circulars, was 16 inches in eastern Montana. Professor Shaw wrote, "The soil of this entire area is essentially a clay loam, very rich in mineral matter...has great staying power. The water is relatively good. A portion of this region has been homesteaded for the past two or three years by persons who have prospered."

Montana's chamber of commerce, the State Bureau of Labor, Agriculture and Industry, and other state government officials published facts and figures to prove homesteading could be profitable. A statewide Montana Development League kicked in to sound its drumbeat. "Locators" were there to meet new arrivals and would, for a fee, show them the landscape and help file their claims.

There were some dissenting scientists, Dr. Toole says. R.N. Sutherlin, since 1872 the editor of *The Rocky Mountain Husbandman,* a popular farm journal, labeled dryland farming "a misleading misnomer" that "misrepresents our conditions here to the easterner or would-be settler."

Dr. F. B. Linfield, an agriculture professor at Montana State College in Bozeman and the director of the state's only agricultural experiment station, was convinced that Montana was too dry to support all the new farmers. He advocated combining irrigation with dryland farming. However, the land which could be irrigated was soon taken, and the honyockers kept coming, taking the land on the benches, away from the rivers.

From 1910 to 1917, the average rainfall in central and eastern Montana conformed to the promotional brochures: 16 inches. This "wet" period ensured good crops. The average yield per acre was 25 bushels, a very good yield. The U.S. Federal Reserve Bank approved farm loans, and the National



Montana Historical Society

State fairs in the early 1900s showcased the bounty of dryland farming in central and eastern Montana, "a desert waiting to bloom." Railroads, land developers, and agricultural "experts" preached the gospel of dryland farming, the government promoted its share through laws that encouraged settlement, and the homesteaders poured in.

A succession of "wet" years and a misrepresentation of the region's cyclical climate proved their prophecy temporarily correct. Exhibits such as this one from the Judith Basin showed a veritable cornucopia, and by 1916 Montana farmers were growing nearly 3.5 million acres of wheat. However, just four years later, the true aridity and fragility of the plains was disastrously apparent: one out of every two Montana farms went bust in a drought.

Council of Defense sounded the siren that "food will win the war." Farmers expanded and planted as much wheat as they could.

"New towns sprang up, honyocker towns, very much unlike the old cattlemen towns," said Dr. Toole. "These were utilitarian towns. They were not marked by bars and saloons. They were marked by granaries, the church, the school, the one main street. Everybody was very serious. This is not a whoop-em-up town at all."

Good prices, good weather, readily available loans, increasing use of new farm machinery—all these circumstances meant that there *was* reason to hope. However, Dr. Toole ends his lecture with a reference to Walter Prescott Webb, who said, "Once the desert has been recognized and accepted as the dominant force in the west, what goes on there among animals, plants, and men makes sense." As hopeful as this new Montana boom was at its apex in 1917, Dr. Toole is saying, it never really faced the essential truth of the Northern Plains. It never, therefore, really made sense.

They published a magazine—beautiful color photographs of what could be done out here—the cost of which was all borne by the railroads. And the railroads made it extremely easy to get here. They had, for instance, what they called a one-way, settler's fare.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Professor Toole has thus far established several important patterns that recur through Montana's first 50 years. As he crosses into the new century, he does so as many Americans did; he goes to the homesteads. The pattern of too much too soon without thought of the natural resources—the land—continues through Montana's homestead, or honyocker period, 1900-1920. Though these new arrivals to Montana were tough and well intentioned, they ignored the fragility of Montana's land.

BEFORE VIEWING

We are coming to a period in Montana's history where we can reach through the generations and hear our own family's story. Oral history is important. Although Dr. Toole tells us that three-fourths of the homesteaders left the state, over 20,000 people stayed. Who these people were and how they survived the homesteader bust are questions we may be able to answer by asking our relatives. Have students poll their classmates to find out whose grandfathers or grandmothers or great-grandparents came to Montana during this homesteader period. Perhaps you can invite to speak in your classroom someone in your community who can bring these days alive through personal reminiscence.

Montana Historical Society

Unloading supplies at Stanford, 1908. The Great Northern Railway across Montana was finished in 1893. It was built by James Hill, who "wanted to see some 8,000 farms where there were only 150 huge ranches," Toole says. The Great Northern and other railroads not only linked Montana agriculture to major markets, they were aggressive promoters of homesteading and dryland farming. One promotional poster showed an illustration of a farmer plowing across a map of Montana, silver dollars spewing from his blade.

The Montana Historical Society in Helena has an ongoing oral history project that focuses on the homesteaders. Its staff can offer advice and perhaps help schedule a presentation at your school.

WHILE VIEWING

Since this may be Professor Toole's most statistical lecture, viewers may want to prepare for some important note-taking. One of the ways a historian can judge a period and, to a certain extent, the people of that time, is through data. Dr. Toole mentions agriculture yields, prices and dates, fees paid, numbers of banks, numbers of farms, and even the square footage of the homesteaders' cabins.

Professor Toole is again outspoken in defense of Montana's natural resources—in this case, its topsoil and the value of the land. Viewers may want to talk about the specifics of Dr. Toole's conservationist perspective. The topsoil—the land's fertility—is inextricably linked to the future, just as the homesteaders' use of Montana's lands is important to us today. The land's ability to sustain life is every generation's legacy to its children. Does any generation have the right to degrade this inheritance?

AFTER VIEWING

Often the head of a homestead would have to leave during the winter to work in town to support his family. Consider this woman's description:

> When he went away, I was left once more on the homestead without a man, and this time with nine children, the youngest a baby three weeks old. He sent every dollar of his wages home as fast as it was earned, yet with me the winter was one long struggle to keep my family warmed and fed, and to save the horses from starvation. Upon the horses depended our ability to put in one more crop.

Perhaps the most resounding insight into the lives of Montana homesteaders comes to us through the writings of women. Viewers may want to further their appreciation for the hard lives of these people by reading from the published diaries of homestead women (see Bibliography at the end of this chapter).

Another important resource is the film, *Heartland,* produced by Elizabeth Ferris and Annick Smith of Missoula. The movie was filmed near Harlowton, Montana, and is based on the life and letters of Wyoming homesteader, Elinor Pruitt Stewart. The Montana Committee for the Humanities in Missoula will help you arrange a showing of this excellent film and a community discussion. Or, you can rent a copy of the film (16mm) through its distributor, Twiman Films (toll free 1-800-543-9594). Another source is to try your local video rental store.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Dr. Toole says that historians don't know the origins of the word "honyocker." Some say it comes from the word "hunyak," which means an immigrant from central Europe. It was a perjorative term; you did not call your friend a honyocker. "Scissorbill," "nester," and "honyocker" were terms for name calling, terms of derision.

Dr. Toole also says that although the railroads encouraged immigrants to homestead in the Northern Plains (many of them were Scandinavian or Slavic), most of the homesteaders were native born. Very few arrived in Montana without their wives and children. Most had some farming experience, though a sizeable minority had never farmed before.

James J. Hill, the founder of the Great Northern Railroad, is worth studying. Some students may want to read one of his biographies for extra credit. Dr. Toole calls him an "empire builder." He was a railroad builder, to be sure, which, at the end of the 19th century, put him in a class with few others. He must have had a single-mindedness because he built the railroad without the federal government subsidies and incentives given his big competitor, Northern Pacific.

Hill was a Canadian who had already built a rail line between St. Paul, Minnesota, and Winnipeg, Canada. By 1866, both by new construction and by buying existing lines, his road to the Pacific Ocean reached Minot, North Dakota. He worked with Paris Gibson, the father of Great Falls, to preempt both Helena and Butte and push his railroad through Great Falls—which it did in the spring of 1887, its tracks right through the middle of the town's finest park. The Great Northern's engineers were the first to find the Marias Pass through the Continental Divide, and the road reached Everett, Washington, in the summer of 1893.

Writer Joseph Kinsey Howard thought Hill important because he demonstrated how much influence one strong individual could have over the history of an entire region. After the Enlarged Homestead Act and the sales ability of James Hill's scientists, homesteaders filed on one million acres of Montana in 1909. The next year, it was almost five million acres. By the time Hill died in 1916, homesteaders took up 42 percent of the entire state of Montana. They were growing nearly 3.5 million acres of wheat.

Hill saw the fruition of his dream. The homesteaders were still arriving, the price of wheat was up because of the war effort, and there was hope that hard work and dryland farming would continue to make the desert bloom. But Hill passed away before this dream faded into the mirage of the hot, ceaseless drought of the postwar years.

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________________ *Letters of an Elk Hunt by a Woman Homesteader,* Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1915. Reprinted 1979.

Now he takes you back and helps you file on it and says, 'Do you have any cousins, uncles, aunts, brothers, and sisters who might like to join you out here and so on and so forth?' It's a real development scam. Not always. There were, I have to say, some perfectly honest locators making a living at 25 cents per family. Most of them, however, were not. They were developers. As you all know, that has all changed now, and developers in Montana are perfectly honest people. They wouldn't mislead you for the world.

LECTURE 16

THE DRY YEARS

> *Let me give you these figures. I hate them, but here they are, as simplified as I can make them. One out of every two farms in Montana went out of business between 1921 and 1925. Between 1920 and 1925, two million acres went out of production in the state. That's about one-fifth of the total area of the state or, to put it another way, 11,000 farms simply blew away...and disappeared.*

THE FAILURE OF THE HOMESTEADERS in Montana was due to more than poor farming and banking practices, although these were an important part. K. Ross Toole believes that the failure was rooted in an ignorance of the land, its limitations, and its history. By now, his strong commitment to the land is easy to discern in every lecture.

Dr. Toole begins this lecture with a description of the reclamation philosophy of Major John Wesley Powell, the first director of the U.S. Geological Survey. In Powell's time, the majority opinion among government officials and scientists was that the rivers of the West could successfully make the desert bloom. But Powell went against convention. In his 1878 *Report on the Lands of the Arid Region of the United States,* Powell said that only three percent of the West could be reclaimed using the rivers. Dr. Toole agrees. "The three percent figure is what happened...Powell was prophetic," he says. Powell also called the homesteader movement "criminal" because "they cannot maintain themselves."

Powell and another dissenting voice, that of the National Conservation Commission, called for a moratorium on further settlement in the Northern Plains. Instead, Congress passed the Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909. The honyocker boom and bust was the result.

The drought began in the spring of 1917. That summer the Havre *Plaindealer* called the dryness "the worst in the history of the state," although at the time the drought was limited to the northern counties. Where the average yield of wheat had been 25 bushels to the acre (1900-16), Hill County farmers harvested only two bushels per acre in 1917. Harvest dropped to one-half bushel in Blaine County.

But Cascade County harvested wheat at 30 bushels an acre that year, and the Judith Basin reported 15 bushels to the acre. The drought, in other words, was not yet statewide.

However, 1918 brought worse weather. Dry winds began to blow in the spring. Shelby got 8.8 inches of moisture through 1918. "You can't grow crops in under 12," Dr. Toole tells us. "It ought to be 15 but, at 8.8, you get nothing." Havre reported 8.8 inches in 1918 and 7.7 in 1919. "The drought is really beginning to burn hard," Dr. Toole continues. The humidity drops to an average of four percent in eastern Montana. "That is enough to crack your skin," the professor says.

In 1918, 3,000 people were destitute in Hill County, the county named after the Great Northern Railroad's James Hill, homesteading's great promoter. Forest fires and grass fires burned out of control. Workers found scorpions in eastern Montana, the first time they had ever been reported. You could walk across the Missouri River at Rocky Point without getting your knees wet. The governor, Samuel V. Stewart, summoned the Montana legislature into special session in July, but it provided no relief. Ranchers imported hay from the Midwest at $60 a ton (as Toole says, multiply by eight).

"By September of 1919," says Dr. Toole, "about 40,000 people in eastern and central Montana were without the essentials of life."

The state's Commissioner of Agriculture called the reports of drought "wild" and blamed the problem on the farmers—people such as clerks, barbers, factory hands, and others—who did not have enough experience. Dr. Toole says the attitude of the newspapers and the Montana legislature was that the honyockers asked for their plight, that it was no one's fault but their own.

But the loss in dollars was staggering. In 1919 the harvest was about 23 million bushels short of projections. At $2.23 a bushel, the going rate of wheat, that's a loss of over $50 million to the state's farmers.

In the spring of 1920, it rained—briefly. And then the dry winds began again, bringing the first "dusters" Northern Plains farmers had ever seen. They whipped the soil into the sky. Farmers' children had to cover their faces with wet cloths to keep from choking on the dust that seeped through the walls of their houses. The storm left drift-like piles of dust against the doors of the houses. This was the fourth straight year of drought. Wheat stem maggots, grasshoppers, and Mormon crickets ate what few crops survived.

Professor Toole turns to the results of the honyocker bust. One out of every two farms—11,000 in all—failed. Montana's bankruptcy rate was the highest in the country. Farm values per acre were cut in half to $11 an acre. Seventy percent of Montana's banks failed. The situation was a precursor of the Great Depression, which would strike the country as a whole by 1929. There was also erosion. "Erosion is rated as severe in a dozen eastern counties and as moderate-to-severe in two dozen counties," Dr. Toole says.

The honyocker period was also the "county busting" period. In the 12 years preceding 1925, Montana's counties increased from 33 to 56. The Leighton Act, passed by the Montana legislature in 1915, allowed easy rules for creating new counties. That meant 23 new counties with 23 new courthouses, commissioners, sheriffs, jails, clerks, and their equipment. Between 1923 and 1943, county expenses in Montana rose 592 percent, Dr. Toole says.

In the final four minutes of this lecture, Dr. Toole talks about the slow revival of Montana's agriculture after the honyocker bust. Ranchers bought back land they had sold to the honyockers at vastly deflated prices. What land they didn't sell went to the counties as public land.

The honyockers who stayed, approximately 20,000 of them, fundamentally became ranchers, Dr. Toole says. They instituted land conservation measures such as shelter belts and trees, and they began to farm larger areas.

> *The inevitable will come again. It's on a cycle. It will come again, if indeed it's not already with us. It is, I might add, according to a lot of climatologists, time that it arrived. Twenty-seven to 30 years and what's happening now in far eastern Montana may be the beginning. I don't know. I'm not a climatologist. But I'd keep my eye on it pretty carefully if I were you and if I were farming or ranching in that area.*

Montana Historical Society

Sod house of the Everson family near Big Sandy, 1914. Many homesteading families posed proudly in front of their homes with an informality that belied the struggles against a harsh climate and the backbreaking labor and loneliness that typified life on the prairie. In Of Us and the Oxen, *Sarah Ellen Roberts wrote, "During the long cold winter, it seemed that all our effort and energy were spent in just keeping alive...but when the spring came, life seemed to take on deeper meaning, and we felt we were a part, even if a small one, of a greater purpose of awakening, of creation and of growth."*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

To Professor Toole, the story of the honyocker bust is more than the failure of individual homesteaders. It is a story of a failure to appreciate the fragile nature of the Northern Plains region. Since drought is cyclical, the failure of the homesteaders is an important lesson for any Montanan to keep in mind.

BEFORE VIEWING

The honyocker bust was more than the end of Montana's homesteading period. It marked the end of a 300-year expansion across the continent of optimistic American farmers. Viewers may want to place the failure of Montana's homesteaders in this broad context. There was no place left to farm. Here was the end of the farming frontier.

It also was the last giant wave of the boom and bust cycle in Montana. Within barely 100 years, Montana Territory and then the state had seen the explorers and missionaries, fur trappers and traders, gold miners, cattle and sheep ranchers, lumbermen, and Butte's copper tycoons come and go. All had changed Montana quickly and permanently.

Viewers with a scientific orientation may want to research what climatologists can tell us about cyclical droughts and the problems that seem to join with a lack of moisture: insects, winds, and fire. Would such an extensive drought have similar effect today?

Erosion is another possible extra-credit assignment, as is the history of water rights and the methods of irrigation. How have wells and well-digging evolved in eastern and central Montana?

WHILE VIEWING

Again, Professor Toole uses statistics to dramatize the effects of the 1917-1925 drought in Montana. He documents the progression of human and ecological suffering. Note-taking, again, is important here.

AFTER VIEWING

Dissenting voices are important to Dr. Toole. With the wisdom of hindsight, a historian can separate myth from truth. The honyocker period is a lesson in the sense that the homesteaders had the blessings of most of their contemporaries. Congress had passed encouraging laws. Soil scientists were promoting a "new" science of dryland farming. World War I produced inflated prices for agricultural products, and government banks encouraged agricultural expansion with easy loans. The railroads and real estate salesmen created an effective campaign to convince settlers that the benefits of coming to eastern Montana outweighed the risks.

The dissenting voices ring clear to Dr. Toole, the historian. And perhaps there is a lesson for those of us who are not historians, that we should be more tolerant of dissenters in our own age.

Also, there is no doubt that the honyockers changed Montana agriculturally as well as culturally. There is a wealth of extra-credit assignments here for the person interested in the social sciences. For one, women and children, perhaps for the first time, arrived in Montana in numbers. There were new priorities, new counties, new towns, new life styles, a new social atmosphere. Some viewers may want to explore these changes.

BACKGROUND NOTES

In the mid-1880s, John Wesley Powell was more the dreamer than the scientist. He thought the rivers of the West could be diverted to provide the farms with more than enough water to irrigate their crops. He even predicted that every farm pond would be stocked with fish. There would be more fish than cattle on the plains. A myth was born.

Montana Historical Society

A young member of a family that farmed in Leroy, Blaine County, Montana (1913).

But, working with the U.S. Geological Survey and studying stream flows and the soil, by 1893 Powell had come to be more the scientist than the dreamer. He and others documented that irrigation west of the 100th meridian was a mirage. But a myth, when believed by many people, dies hard. This myth became entangled with the "scientific dryland farming" of Hardy Webster Campbell and the promotions of the powerful railroads. Powell was not heard.

And what of the homesteaders who stayed? They have undoubtedly added a toughness to Montana's social fabric. Dr. Toole writes about one who stayed, Bud Redding, in his 1976 book, *The Rape of the Great Plains.* The Redding family "hunkered down." They fed the last plant to dry in the drought – the thistles – to their cows. They also soaked beans, of which they had plenty, and fed the beans to their animals. They ate porcupines. They let their hogs range free to eat anything they could find, and then they ate the hogs. After the drought, they diversified their entire farming operation.

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Literally, the surface of the earth itself burned in huge prairie fires. Now remember, there is no government involved here. There are no relief agencies. The Red Cross is still busy in Europe. There is no federal government to declare disaster areas with payments to the farmers and ranchers. By August of 1919, Hill County alone had 3,000 destitute people, and by destitute, I mean destitute. Nothing to eat, no place to go except to get the hell out of there. Which is precisely what they did.

LECTURE 17

THE SMOKE MUST GO

> *So, slowly and, as usual, belatedly, the public became agitated. It began with a Dr. Robarts, who happened to be the [Butte] city health officer, and he happened to take his job seriously. A special smoke committee was now appointed by the city council, and inevitably the committee concluded after looking at a few bare statistics that there was but one solution: the abolishment of heap roasting. But how are you going to abolish heap roasting? That's going to cost jobs. Immediately upon the abolishment suggestion, the Boston and Montana Company, one of the big mines, said that if that were done, it would close entirely. It would fire all its men and pull out of Butte.*

THE YEAR 1890 WAS A BAD YEAR FOR air pollution in Butte. "In the month of July that year," Dr. Toole says, "the smoke blinded the city for 28 continuous days." The death rate skyrocketed. "From July to October, there were 192 deaths directly attributed to what they called 'smoke poisoning'," he says. Both hospitals in Butte overflowed, with mattresses in the corridors to treat patients. One of Butte's physicians, quoted in the Anaconda *Standard,* said, "Many of these people are simply dying of suffocation." Dr. Toole concludes, "There was no one in Butte who could deny the situation was critical."

The problem was that smelting copper in Butte was still an unsophisticated technology. "Heap roasters" were the preferred method, and they consisted of a giant, open pit, one city block large, dug six feet below the ground. Into this pit workers stacked layers of logs alternated with layers of raw copper ore. The whole thing was set ablaze, and the resulting heat smouldered two to three weeks and reduced the ore to recoverable metal. Butte smeltermen, understandably, didn't want to pay the freight costs on tons of raw ore. It was cheaper to smelt or partially purify the valuable copper on site and then ship the copper elsewhere for further refining. Slow burning removed all but eight percent of the sulphur from the ore.

But the sulphur and other impurities had to go somewhere. The fire let loose tremendous smoke with residues of arsenic, lead, sulphur dioxide, fluorides, and other air pollutants. As mining in Butte expanded, more and more heap roasters were set ablaze. Like many of Montana's alluvial valleys, Butte's valley was subject to air inversions, or periods when stagnant valley-bottom air was trapped beneath levels of warm air above. The smoke became concentrated when these inversions struck.

Dr. Toole quotes one delegate to the 1889 Constitutional Convention, who said that when passing through Butte, he felt as if "some demonic theme was injecting lime into my lungs." Copper king William Andrews Clark admitted that Butte was smoky but said there was nothing to prove the smoke harmful. In actual fact, Clark said, the smoke was a disinfectant, "a treasured cosmetic" that Butte women liked because it kept them appearing beautifully pale. "The ladies of Butte are renowned wherever they go," concluded Clark.

By 1990 it was clear to the majority of Butte's residents that something had to be done. *The Engineering and Mining Journal* reported that 25,000 tons of ore were "constantly in process of open-air roasting" in 1890. Practically all the vegetation in the town and the surrounding hillsides had vanished. One journalist climbed to the top of one of Butte's mountains and reported that below were "shores of a still, calm sea of deep, murky water, which [has] buried everything below it. Every prominent building and landmark was obscured and only the surface of the silent, mysterious sea below could be discovered."

What to do?

The city council appointed a "smoke committee" that visited every heap roaster and recommended "abating" or closing down all the open-air smelters. In December 1890, the council passed an ordinance declaring open roasting a public nuisance and banning all heap roasting not passed through a 75-foot chimney. Then the council sent notices to all the smeltermen warning of $100 to $500 fines.

"Immediately upon the abolishment suggestion," says Dr. Toole, "the Boston and Montana Company said that if that were done, it would close entirely. It would fire all its men and pull out of Butte."

As if on cue, the Parrot Mine shut down. The issue was one of public health versus jobs, and Butte's public officials were caught in the middle. Butte had worked for years to attract the investment capital needed to keep its economy employing people. The city council voted to give the smeltermen a six-week variance. Then spring arrived. The killer inversions disappeared in the winds of the changing season.

The confrontation boiled over again in November 1891. The Boston and Montana, through its Butte superintendent, Captain Thomas Couch, refused to see any relationship between the heap roasters' smoke and the city's funerals. Couch advocated more studies, and his company constructed six more heaps awaiting the torch. At William Andrews Clark's Butte Reduction Works, one heap was ready; another was under construction. Rumors spread through Butte: the smeltermen were going to defy the council and set fire to their heaps before Christmas. Couch told the mayor that "it was absolutely necessary for the Boston and Montana to resume heap roasting." He said he could wait no longer than December 15. The mayor told Couch he would be arrested. "And on December 15," Dr. Toole says, "the heaps were lighted. The order for Couch's arrest went out. But when the police arrived, they discovered that the captain and his family had taken a train for the East on December 14 for vacation."

An attorney for the company denied that the city had the authority to pass the smoke ordinance. He denied that heap roasting rendered the atmosphere unfit and endangered the lives of the inhabitants. To shut off the heap roasting would throw people out of work. But the court issued a permanent injunction on open-air smelting. Butte city workers, working around the clock for three days, extinguished the heaps.

The victory was a symbolic one, however. Even the elimination of heap roasting did not put an end to Butte's pollution problems. Production of copper increased 60 percent in the first two years of the 1890s. Even smelters with chimneys poured out the smoke. True relief did not come to Butte until 1906, when the ore went directly to smelters in Great Falls or to the Amalgamated Copper Company's Anaconda smelter.

In the final 10 minutes of his lecture, Dr. Toole jumps 10 years to talk about the air pollution caused by the construction of the giant Washoe Smelter in Anaconda in 1902. The previous smelter, he says, was located higher up Warm Springs Creek. When Standard Oil purchased the Anaconda Company, the smelter was expanded and moved to the mouth of the creek. The winds took the emissions from its 300-foot smokestack – the tallest in the world – and carried them out into one of Montana's earliest and most famous ranching valleys.

Dr. Toole says that hay production decreased roughly 75 percent in quantity. One rancher lost a thousand head of cattle, 20 horses, and 800 sheep in a two-week period. The farmers united to form the Deer Lodge Farmers Association and sued Amalgamated. The first case was settled out of court for $330,000. There was "nothing for land, and nothing for crops," Dr. Toole says. The association sued again, and this case, the Bliss case, is somewhat of a landmark decision. The Standard Oil Company brought in a host of expert scientists and veterinarians to testify, and the court found for the company. On that sad note, Dr. Toole concludes this lecture.

> *And so, week after week they burned on, and an exodus from Butte, a physical exodus, took place. In one day, the two railroads reported ticket sales of $4,000. Among the first tickets sold were several to Judge William Stapleton and his family. He took his family to San Francisco for a vacation. But he left behind a statement with the city attorney. That statement denied that the city ordinance was legal. It was, indeed, unconstitutional. Two, it asserted that, 'There is absolutely no proof that heap roasting renders the atmosphere of this city unfit or dangerous to one's health.' Three, it asserted that to stop heap roasting would throw hundreds of men out of work and threaten the welfare of the entire company.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

With only three lectures and a conclusion remaining, Dr. Toole breaks with the chronology of his lectures. We go back to the last decade of the 19th century. Dr. Toole wants to talk about air pollution. He is also talking about something more – themes that by this time should be readily apparent to his viewers. They have to do with power, the power of large out-of-state interests to control the destiny of the people of Montana. In this instance, Dr. Toole talks about the efforts of well-meaning Butte residents to curtail the death rate in their city due to the emissions of Butte's smelters. In the end, Butte's city council did curtail open-air smelting, but not without a powerful showdown between public and private interests. It is a showdown that, in some respects, continues today.

BEFORE VIEWING

In *Forty Years on the Frontier,* Granville Stuart, discoverer of gold and early cattle rancher, describes arriving in Butte on the train in 1885. In a yellowish smoke thick with fumes of arsenic and sulphur, Stuart could barely discern the train depot through the smog. "We could not see, and we could scarcely breathe," he wrote later. This situation grew worse as copper production and smelting expanded during the next five years.

By 1890 the community was struggling to come to grips with a tremendously difficult problem: how to balance the citizens' right to clean air with the needs of private enterprise. Using court records, newspaper articles, memoirs, and death certificates, Dr. Toole looks at this complex issue through the magnifying glass of history. It is an issue his viewers can also discuss in its contemporary forms. The boundaries of the discussion may have shifted, but the same issues are alive in today's discussions about the conservation of Montana's water, land, and air.

Perhaps the best introduction for Dr. Toole's lecture is a discussion – either by oral or written report – of the complexities of public welfare versus private rights. How does society strike a balance? Who decides? Is it ever right to pollute the air, water, or land? When is it right? When is it wrong? Who pays the price? What forms do these payoffs or payments take?

WHILE VIEWING

This lecture gives viewers a valuable insight into the historian's use of statistics. Viewers should keep track of Dr. Toole's use of facts and figures. While the superintendent of the Boston and Montana Company, Captain Thomas Couch, and his attorneys deny the adverse health effects of Butte's heavy smog and call for more studies, Dr. Toole uses statistics to back up the point of view that the pollution was, in fact, extremely damaging. While watching the lecture, viewers should write down the figures Dr. Toole cites. They should also ask themselves from where these statistics came. What does this tell us about the historian's research?

AFTER VIEWING

Public officials and the citizens they served were being pulled in two different directions. It was an ambiguous situation for many residents in Butte. On one hand, few would deny that the air pollution in the city was causing great harm. Neighbors would fall dead in the street. The toxic fumes were strong enough that many suffered bleeding noses and vomiting. There was a direct relationship between Butte's death rate and the city's repeated air inversions.

On the other hand, to many the smoke was a sign of progress. This was a "copper camp," after all. Here were ample jobs, and opportunity for immigrants new to the United States to gain a foothold in the country's economy. And, in all likelihood, if a person could stick it out, things were bound to improve. This wasn't a deadly pall of lung-melting smoke. This was American Dreamland. It all depended on your perspective.

Perhaps the best way to get at this ambiguity is to act out the roles of these historical characters. The setting is a Butte courtroom. The judge is empowered to decide whether a permanent restraining order (banning) will be issued to the owners of the heap roasters below the city. And to testify, we have:

Captain Thomas Couch, superintendent of the Boston and Montana Company, just back from vacation with his family in the East.

Dr. Heber Robarts, Butte's public health officer, who has monitored Butte's ambient air statistics since 1889.

Henry Mueller, the new mayor of Butte.

W. A. Burley, a Custer County rancher and legislator brought in by some of Butte's residents to testify about differences in air quality around the state.

William Andrews Clark, former president of Montana's Constitutional Convention, owner of a number of Butte's mines, and candidate for U.S. Senator.

Katy Malone, a Butte rooming house owner. Many miners have stayed at Malone's over the years.

Mrs. Wilmilla Fraser, wife of Malcolm Fraser, a miner who died of pneumonia during the winter of '90.

BACKGROUND NOTES

From 1887-1890 most of the smelters in Butte increased their production twofold. Six of the most potent copper smelters in the world were strung out in a picket line along the base of the Butte hill: the Boston and Montana Upper and Lower Works, the Butte and Boston, the Parrot, the Butte Reduction Works, and the Colorado Smelter. In 1890, 113 million pounds of copper were mined and processed in Butte.

We can only imagine what this raw city of 30,000 must have been like because there are no modern American equivalents. As bad as the wood smoke inversions may be in western Montana valleys during the winter, they cannot compare to Butte in 1890. Gardens would not grow. There was an incessant clamor and dust of the stamp mills that crushed the ore. Carriage drivers had to drive slowly lest they knock over pedestrians or crash into other carriages. Railroad engines regularly collided with each other in the city's switching yards. Trolley cars constantly rang their bells. Workers lost their way going and coming from work.

We know now that air pollution can cause the human lungs' defense system to break down. Pneumonia, bronchitis, or abscess of the lungs can result. In Butte in 1890, they had no such proof, though Dr. Hebar Robarts, the health officer, found Butte's death rate that year higher than either Chicago or London. It was Dr. Robarts, a local preacher named Reverend Rounde, and Butte's most widely read newspaper, the Anaconda *Standard,* that pressed the issue to the public and to the companies. They called the smoke poisoning deaths "preventible disease" and called for tall smokestacks to disperse the fumes away from the city.

The irony of these taller stacks is that they do not solve the problems. Air pollution then, as air pollution now, is an enormously complex issue. What Professor Toole calls "the tall stack syndrome" spread the problem over a broader land mass and created its own contentions. Dr. Toole's brief introduction to the Deer Lodge Farmers Association serves as an introduction to his succeeding lecture, which goes into further detail.

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This is the first I've heard of the tall stack syndrome, which we have been at ever since, of course. We are still saying, though it is appalling, that we don't know better, that to cure pollution from coal-fired generating plants, all you have to do is put up these big, tall chimneys. All the big, tall chimneys do, of course, is to spread sulphur dioxide and other toxic wastes farther into the atmosphere, thus enabling them to cause acid rain a couple thousand miles further downwind.

LECTURE 18

MONTANA'S RESOURCES: FUTURE OR FAILURE?

> *Now, let me make it clear that Roosevelt's intent was not to deal solely with the Anaconda smelter. He had been aware for some time that the whole West was plagued by copper smelters and all of the by-products coming out of their stacks. And this concerned him greatly because he was very knowledgeable about the West.*

THE NEW ANACONDA COMPANY SMELTER, called the Washoe Smelter, opened on January 25, 1902. Located at the southern end of the Deer Lodge Valley, it was the world's largest and most modern and cost $9.5 million to build. Two-thirds of all the ore mined in Butte–7,000 tons of ore every day–found its way into the Washoe's 64 McDougal furnaces. The new processes cut the cost of refining copper to 2½ cents a pound.

The Washoe was an engineering marvel, but its engineers failed to design it with air pollution controls which, at that time, were unproven. By November 1902, the carcasses of several hundred horses and cows lay scattered over various ranches in the Deer Lodge Valley, a narrow valley 50 miles wide and 10 miles long. Peter Levengood, a valley rancher since 1867, was raising hay only three miles northwest of the smelter. His hay production declined by 75 percent. Nick Bielenberg, who owned 5,800 acres 12 miles from the Washoe, had to move his herds to the Big Hole Valley after he lost 1,000 cattle, 800 sheep, and 20 horses. All the dead stock showed arsenic poisoning, said the two chemists brought in by the newly formed Deer Lodge Farmers Association. The farmers sued the company for damages.

As Professor Toole said in his previous lecture, the farmers settled their first suit out of court for claims aggregating $330,000. Bielenberg presented the company with his own itemized statement of losses totalling $131,000. The company offered him $10,000, and he refused.

In September 1903, the Washoe Smelter shut down for improvements. The company built an even higher stack and perfected the inner workings of its smoke flues to collect more of the ore dust that had been escaping with the smoke. Two tons of dust per day were then loaded on the ore cars. The newspapers called the rebuilding a success. But, by autumn of 1904, more farmers a greater distance from the stack began losing cattle. The new flues may have collected more valuable heavy metals than before, but they had not done anything to relieve the smoke of its arsenic or sulphuric acid. Massive amounts of sulphur dioxide and arsenic exited the plant everyday, and the higher stack spread it further.

On February 21, 1905, 107 farmers met and roughed out their damages at $1,175,000, which included the title of 60,525 acres of nearly worthless land. The company stonewalled. The farmers raised $40,000 and sued. They asked for a federal court injunction permanently restraining the Washoe Smelter. This was the Bliss case, named for Fred J. Bliss, a former Butte butcher and owner of 320 acres five miles southwest of the plant.

"We have a perfect right to carry on a legitimate business," C.F. Kelly, Secretary of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, told the court. "And if incidentally we should pollute the atmosphere, nobody has the right to complain until specific damages gives him a cause of action." In Kelly's view, the company had already paid damages, and the remodeling had eliminated emission problems. Economic catastrophe would result if the court forced the smelter to close. Anaconda paid more than $7 million a year in wages and 25 percent of the total taxes in the state of Montana. It provided 20 percent of the nation's copper and 11.5 percent of the world's. A parade of scientists—"men of national and some of international reputation"—traveled to Anaconda, stayed in the company's hotel, and testified by denying the farmers' charges.

Federal Judge William Hunt denied the injunction on May 25, 1909. The company had built the smelter according to "the best known methods and processes." It had done all it could, the court implied. The company was right in its assertion that economic catastrophe would result if it were enjoined. The scientists who had testified for the farmers—W.D. Harkins of the University of Montana and R.S. Swain of Stanford University—had been "too indefinite and uncertain" and proved "no substantial injury" to the Deer Lodge farmers. Judge Hunt assessed the Anaconda Company $350 for "special damages" to be paid to Fred Bliss.

When the case was appealed, the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals confirmed Hunt's decision. The farmers filed a writ of certiorari from the U.S. Supreme Court, but they couldn't raise the $4,155 to cover the costs of the paperwork. When the suit arose in the docket of the Supreme Court, the justices bypassed the case because they did not receive the farmers' papers in time. The farmers were finished.

About six months before the Bliss case decision, however, the farmers began a series of letters to President Theodore Roosevelt. This was a logical decision. Roosevelt was a man of the West, a conservationist, a populist and progressive Republican, and a personal friend of Deer Lodge rancher, Conrad Kohrs. Two of the Deer Lodge Farmers Association letters ran 30 typewritten pages. "We are the pioneers of Montana," the farmers wrote. Many of them had already gone bankrupt because the local bankers wouldn't lend them money for "smoked land." "The company's main defense [in the trial] is the magnitude of their operations," they wrote.

The federal goverment under Roosevelt had already begun to study the effects of sulphur dioxide pollution from Western smelters, and the appeal from these Montanans struck a responsive chord in President Roosevelt. As early as 1903, J.K. Haywood, a government chemist, had been studying the effects of sulphur dioxide pollution on the vegetation surrounding the Kenwich Smelter in Redding, California. The U.S. Justice Department, under Attorney General Charles J. Bonaparte, had won an injunction against another California smelter, the Mountain Copper Smelter, after 6,000 acres of national forest had been damaged.

Federal officials had watched a legal battle develop between the State of Georgia and the Tennessee Copper Company, when the company built a tall stack and began polluting Georgia farmland. The courts granted Georgia a permanent injunction and forced the company to develop pollution control devices. Bonaparte then hired the winner of the Georgia case, Ligon Johnson, to work for the U.S. Justice Department as a special assistant.

After thorough preparations, Roosevelt summoned John D. Ryan of the Anaconda Company to the White House on December 5, 1908. Also present were Nick Bielenberg, W.C. Staton, and R.L. Clinton of the Deer Lodge Farmers Association. In Roosevelt's opinion, the damage to Deer Lodge National Forest near the smelter was beyond question, and he offered Anaconda three alternatives to prevent a federal suit. The first was to move the smelter to Great Falls, where there were no federal forests. The second was to move it back to Butte, where the pollution damage had already been done. And the third was to remove the Washoe Smelter's sulphur dioxide fumes and convert them to fertilizer, a process already being done in Tennessee.

The idea was to mix sulphuric acid with a phosphate rock. Special assistant Johnson estimated Anaconda's cost to convert its plant at $4 million. With a phosphate bed 380 miles from the Washoe, Johnson estimated that over 2,000 tons of sulphuric acid and almost 16 tons of white arsenic could be produced daily at the Washoe without interfering with copper production. He told Roosevelt that fertilizer consumption in the South was doubling every six years.

The company said that the Washoe was six times larger than the Tennessee smelter and that it was not technically or economically feasible in the Deer Lodge Valley. Ryan asked if the government was willing to guarantee a market for the fertilizer. It was a stand-off. Roosevelt delayed the government's suit until it was too late. The William Howard Taft Administration took over in March 1909. One year later, George Wickersham, Taft's attorney general, filed suit asking the U.S. Circuit Court in Helena to issue a permanent injunction to prohibit the Washoe from polluting the Deer Lodge National Forest.

Government experts prepared their testimony for the trial. George Hedgcock, a forest pathologist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, found that a very large percentage of the timber within 22 miles of the smelter was dying. Trees not being killed were stunted. One fir tree, only four feet high, Hedgcock said, was cut at ground level to reveal a tree 25 years old.

In December 1910, the company offered to settle the suit out of court for $125,000 past damages and $5,000 per year. Attorney General Wickersham called the offer "absurd." Negotiations continued, and eventually Anaconda agreed to a settlement, a contract to "at all times use its best efforts to prevent, minimize, and ultimately completely eliminate the emissions." Wickersham preferred to wait until the company had complied with the agreement before pressing the monetary damages.

The agreement set up a perpetual board—the Anaconda Smoke Commission—to preside over the Washoe Smelter cleanup. Dr. Toole says, "This board, appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, had the right to shut the smelter down without further recourse to anyone if it did not feel that sufficient progress was being made."

The commission hired four metallurgists and two Bureau of Mines' chemists to study the emissions. Time passed. The company disputed the experts' findings. Commission members died and were replaced. World War I took everyone's attention. The commission came to agree with the company that, , unless the system design had commercial–that is, profit-making–feasibility, it should not be attempted. This was a departure from the interpretation intended by both Bonaparte and Wickersham.

By 1916, 1,700 tons of sulphur dioxide per day–over 70 percent more than what was emitted just four years earlier–entered the atmosphere from the Washoe stack. And the company said it was "unduly expensive, impractical, unfeasible and impossible" to invest in the emission abatement at the plant. At the same time, the commission reported that "the amount of dust being discharged from the stack was much greater than earlier years." The report also stated that treating for sulphuric acid "could readily be carried out on a large operating scale wherever the project looked commercially feasible."

In 1924 the final Anaconda Smoke Commission report was issued by the Director of Mines, H. Foster Bain, who based the report entirely on company statistics. It mentioned that 81 percent of the arsenic in the fumes was being successfully eliminated. The company had begun to remove the arsenic not because of its danger to surrounding life forms, but because the arsenic had "become a valuable commodity" which "has approached [the value] of copper." Calcium arsenic, a potent insecticide, was used in the South to combat the cotton boll weevil. The report predicted decreases sulphur dioxide emissions in the near future as well. Fertilizer was now becoming an extraordinary market commodity in the West.

'Would Amalgamated,' Bonaparte asked, 'promise to clean up?' Roosevelt replied, and I quote, 'Well, if experience is to be believed, promises will be made only to be broken.'

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Professor Toole becomes a storyteller in his eighteenth lecture, and his story takes his viewers deep within the inner workings of two American presidencies. In the first quarter of this century, two powerful forces opposed each other. The Anaconda Copper Mining Company, owned by the Standard Oil trust, and the federal government under two assertive and progressive presidents locked horns over the arsenic and sulphur dioxide pollution in Montana's isolated Deer Lodge Valley.

Though Dr. Toole admires the intelligence and consistent concern of both Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft, he admits that both failed to deter the deadly smoke that poured from Anaconda's Washoe Smelter. It is a complex story told through in-depth historical research: memoirs, memos from presidential appointees, and official reports within the administrations. To Dr. Toole, a progressive and opinionated historian, there are distinct lessons for Montanans here–about Anaconda's lack of commitment to Montana's land, about the attitudes necessary to continue polluting that land, and about the limits of the marketplace as a motivator for cleaning up pollution in a state like Montana.

BEFORE VIEWING

A century of mining in Butte has left its legacy. By way of introduction to Dr. Toole's lecture on arsenic and sulphur dioxide pollution from the Washoe Smelter, viewers may want to review current environmental problems still associated with copper smelting in Butte and the Deer Lodge Valley. Or, some viewers may want to work together to research the reasons why Milltown, a small town along the Clark Fork River just east of Missoula, is now eligible for toxic waste cleanup under the federal government's "Superfund" program. Milltown residents discovered dangerous levels of arsenic in their well water. Another topic for research might be the methods of disassembling the Washoe Smelter after it closed in 1980. Viewers may want to research the kinds of ranches that remained in the Deer Lodge Valley through the last century. What has the smelting done to the Clark Fork River Valley?

WHILE VIEWING

Viewers should notice the unique historical research that was necessary for this particular lecture. Dr. Toole reconstructs the events of a period through presidential memoirs, the papers of two presidents' cabinet officers, and their public and private statements. As he takes us inside two presidencies, viewers can sense the excitement Dr. Toole feels. It is the excitement a private detective must feel when piecing together the puzzle of a mystery. While taking notes on the factual nature of the lecture–dates, personalities, and events–viewers may also want to piece together the depths of Dr. Toole's research. List his references as you watch. There is an excitement here, a sense of discovery, perhaps not unlike the discovery of going through a grandparent's attic.

AFTER VIEWING

"There is no history, only biography," said Ralph Waldo Emerson. Dr. Toole's lecture provides a wealth of personalities on the historical stage. Viewers may want to study some of these people in greater depth. Of course, Theodore Roosevelt, "the man of the West," stands out. Viewers may want to take a unique approach to his presidency and his attachment to Montana: Roosevelt in Yellowstone Park, Roosevelt as a member of the Montana Stockgrowers Association, Roosevelt seen through the Anaconda *Standard,* Roosevelt after his presidency.

There are other personalities: President Taft; the Anaconda Company's executive, John D. Ryan; and the pioneer ranchers of the Deer Lodge Valley, Conrad Kohrs, Nick Bielenberg, W.C. Staton.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Behind the scenes of the conflict between President Roosevelt and the Anaconda Company, we see the conflict of two distinct economic and political theories. On one extreme is the *laissez faire* theory, which stresses that government should remain distant from the workings of business. The marketplace is supreme. What was best for the Anaconda Company was best for the nation. Jobs, a richly-expanding economy, entrepreneurial genius, and quality products in the theatre of international trade follow naturally as long as business is left unencumbered by government regulation.

Roosevelt's support came from the other extreme. This was the Progressive Era, when the urge to reform dominated American thinking and politics. It was a reaction to the industrial revolution, to two generations of American history after the Civil War. Reformers thought giant corporations had distorted the marketplace and hoped to establish and maintain an environment where citizens of entrepreneurial expertise could compete with the giants. To do this, government had to take a role.

Also, the Roosevelt presidency was the first rise to power of the conservationist spirit. Roosevelt and his colleagues were concerned that American resources were being used at alarming and accelerating rates.

"The preservation of our forests is an imperative business necessity," Roosevelt said in his first presidential message to Congress. "It is criminal to permit individuals to purchase a little gain for themselves through the destruction of the forests when this destruction is fatal to the well-being of the whole country in the future. The forests can only be protected by the state, by the nation; and the liberty of action of individuals must be conditioned upon what the state or nation determines to be necessary for the common safety."

Contesting the Anaconda Copper Mining Company's air pollution fit into this larger philosophical framework. Montana became the ideological battlefield for the entire nation. Many Montanans, of course, think it still is.

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I think that it might be wise for us to remember what Hegel said: 'The only thing that History teaches us is that History teaches us nothing.' Or, if you don't like that, take Santayana: 'A people who ignore their history are condemned to repeat it.' And we had damned well better be careful about the future.

LECTURE 19

WATER: AN INFINITE RESOURCE?

> *Montanans have protected this great Yellowstone River Basin, along which live 200,000 Montanans. We have done it in the face of enormous pressure, enormous skills, enormous amounts of money, enormous greed, and enormous avarice. So we have a chance. There is no question that it will be a long, long fight.*

IN HIS HOMESTEADING LECTURE (Lecture 16) Dr. Toole mentioned the late 19th-century work of U.S. Geological Survey leader, Major John Wesley Powell. To Dr. Toole, Powell represented the voice of reason, of conservation, amidst a tide of human voices that cried for development. The homesteaders came, spurred on by Congress' passage of the Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909. The honyocker bust that followed was a tragedy that could have been prevented, had Powell's eloquent voice been heard.

Dr. Toole liked Powell's voice. He now raises his own strong voice on the subject of Montana's water and its future uses. He is disturbed by the inconsistency of a series of national studies on Northern Plains coal development, published in the early 1970s.

First, Dr. Toole mentions a study completed by the prestigious National Academy of Sciences, an independent organization of American scientists. The academy undertakes projects with great care. A variety of authorities from many different disciplines then researches the chosen topic, and their final report is open to staunch criticism by scientists throughout the world. The study Dr. Toole mentions discusses reclamation of land that has been strip mined.

About 1.3 trillion tons of coal lie in 25- to 70-foot-thick layers through the Fort Union Coal Formation east of the Rocky Mountains. The coal seams run in a belt from southern Saskatchewan through southeastern Montana and western North Dakota. Montana's share holds between 40 and 50 billion tons of this coal, much of which is low in sulphur and available to strip miners.

Coal, says the National Academy report, is also an aquifer and, in some instances, a kind of double aquifer. One seam of coal lies beneath another, separated by a layer of clay. Groundwater flows along the surface layer of coal and sometimes permeates both layers. The coal acts as a filter. "Removal of the coal by a surface mining operation," the report states, "would intersect the aquifer that is the source of water for several hundred wells in the area." Another section of the report casts doubt on the ability to totally reclaim strip-mined land.

Dr. Toole says that "the data comes late, the data is incomplete, but what there is is very frightening."

He mentions another study by Wayne Van Voast, a hydrologist at the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology. Van Voast drilled a series of observation wells before the Decker Coal Mine opened in southeastern Montana. Very early in the mining, Van Voast found that the water levels more than a mile and a half from the mine had dropped between 10 and 50 feet.

Van Voast also ran comparisons between the water that entered the mine pit and that running in the nearby Tongue River. The water disturbed by the mining contained over 300 times the sodium, nine times the carbonate, sulfates, and dissolved solids, and 30 times as much nitrate. There were also trace levels of heavy metals. "If the aquifer is to be restored," Dr. Toole says, "it is probable that it will bring with it salt, saline, nitrate, etc." The study also indicated that the hydrological effects of the three-square-mile Decker Coal Mine will extend over a radius of 20 miles.

Other studies say that strip mining's disturbance to Montana's groundwater may be only a minor affliction compared to the development of coal-fired power plants and coal gasification plants. These plants demand vast quantities of water. In 1971 "a document of transcendent importance," Dr. Toole says, was published by management representatives of 19 investor-owned utilities, six corporations, two public power districts, an assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, and eight municipalities. *The North Central Power Study* proposed 42 mine-mouth generating plants in five western states, half of which were to be in Montana. Montana's power plants would produce 200,000 megawatts. Each of the plants would be larger than any of Montana's four plants currently at Colstrip. The two largest – of "Brobdingnagian proportions" – would produce 10,000 megawatts each.

The following year, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation published *The Montana-Wyoming Aqueduct Study*. The water necessary to produce 200,000 megawatts in Montana would come from "massive transfers of water from one place to another," says Dr. Toole. The study delineated the potential reservoirs, major and minor canals and conduits, river flows, and pumping stations. The interbasin transfers would change six rivers: the Missouri, Yellowstone, Powder, Tongue, Bighorn, and the Little Bighorn. In less than 30 years, 2.6 million acre feet of water would be required. An acre foot is the amount it would take to cover an acre of land with one foot of water.

The Bureau of Reclamation suggested that five reservoirs could be built along with the huge aqueducts and canals to feed the water to the power plants. The largest dam, called the Allenspur, would be built in the Paradise Valley south of Livingston, Montana. This dam would be 380 feet high, 270 feet deep, 25 miles long, and would hold 1.5 million acre feet of Yellowstone River water. Other proposed dams included the Moorehead (100,000 acre feet), the Hole-in-the-Wall (20,000 acre feet), the Box Elder (30,000 acre feet), and the Little Bighorn (40,000 acre feet).

This development would severely disrupt the Yellowstone River Basin, Dr. Toole suggests. He calls the Yellowstone "the longest free-flowing river left in the United States."

One study realistically examined the effects of this massive development. Published by the Bureau of Reclamation in July 1974, this report took four years to write and directly refuted some of the bureau's own findings in the 1972 *Montana-Wyoming Aqueduct Study.* The second report said that there would not be enough water and that by the year 2000, energy production would consume 3.2 million acre feet. The only way to meet the demand would be to implement the interbasin transfer program, dams and canals, as well as shift some water use from agriculture to industrial use.

Dr. Toole says he was "pleasantly surprised" by this second Bureau of Reclamation report. It admitted that 25 percent of the West–6,500 towns–had either insufficient water or water that was brackish. It said the most critical problem was "the lack of basic biological information" and recommended 72 areas for in-depth studies over a five-year period. It also mentioned the dangers of groundwater contamination, the erosion of land, large-scale fish kills, and the effects on the economies of Montana's Indian nations.

In the final ten minutes of his lecture, Dr. Toole concentrates on Montana's response to these proposed industrial developments within its borders. He calls the response "astonishingly positive and swift, startling in its implications for the rest of the West."

In 1973 the Montana legislature passed a hallmark bill: the Montana Water Use Act. Without disrupting the state's historical approach to water rights, "the doctrine of prior appropriations," the new law required that each water right holder file his or her water right with the state government. "This was an attempt to get a handle on who owns water in Montana and how much water is involved," says Dr. Toole.

Of all the reports, only the National Academy of Sciences report mentioned possible demographic changes in the state due to the development. The report said that major transfers of water would determine the direction of the state's future population. In other words, even the minor availabilities of water along canals or streams would result in new towns and would alter the traditional patterns of transportation and commerce. How the developments would alter the patterns was left unanswered.

Some Montana leaders understood that to make reasonable decisions about the state's future, Montanans would need more information. In that spirit, Governor Thomas Judge introduced a bill into the legislature in 1974 asking for a three-year moratorium on all water development in the Yellowstone River Basin. In his letter explaining the proposal to the President of the Montana Senate, Judge said, "The value of our coal and water has not gone unnoticed by powerful private and public interests beyond our borders. Increasingly, the granting of rights to use these two resources is taking the decision-making authority for our future out of our hands and placing it in the hands of interests located in the financial centers of our nation far removed from the concerns and controls of Montanans."

This was "extraordinary," says Dr. Toole. The stated objective of the moratorium was to grant the state time for the scientific assessment of its water resources. But it was also a message, a message that Montanans recognized the potential impacts of energy development. Montana was demonstrating that it not only had power but was willing to use its power to avoid the repetition of early patterns of resource development in the state.

Dr. Toole was impressed when two-thirds of the Montana legislature voted to pass the governor's bill. It was a majority which had never been achieved in the history of the legislature on any significant piece of legislation. Dr. Toole says that "the entire West was now beginning to watch what Montana was doing with one river basin."

Also, in a move as innovative and significant, the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation listed 5.4 million acre feet of instream flow in the Yellowstone River as a beneficial use. "It has never been done in the history of water law in the United States," Dr. Toole says. "Montanans have protected this great Yellowstone River Basin, along which 200,000 Montanans live."

> *Let me, for a moment, zero in on the Yellowstone River. Because it is the most important. It is, among other things, the longest, free-flowing river left in the United States. Not a dam on it.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Dr. Toole moves from his previous lectures on turn-of-the-century Butte to Montana of the 1970s. In the sense that the state's coal and water development could follow the pattern set by its copper development, this is a logical jump.

Two reports, one by a coalition of energy specialists in 1971 and a second written by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation the following year, have suggested that Montana could support massive strip mines as well as 21 mine-mouth generating and synthetic, or "synfuel" plants. Montana's water could feed these infernos, but only after a series of mammoth dams and conveyor systems are built. Montana's character would change swiftly, and Dr. Toole expresses unbridled concern that there is not yet enough information to predict long-term consequences. The few feasibility studies that have been done suggest that major impacts would result across a broad spectrum of environmental and social patterns.

But, Dr. Toole says that Montana's response to these proposals has been historic. Montana's response has been as wise as it has been emphatic.

BEFORE VIEWING

Water was Montana's highway until the railroads entered the state. It was the bearer of resources, both furs and gold. Water directed the cattle drives, served as boundaries between settlers and native Americans, and cooled the vast smelters at Butte and Anaconda. Before Dr. Toole's lecture on the contemporary conflicts in Montana's water use and conservation, it may be a good time to review—through written reports or classroom discussion—what water has meant to Montanans through the years.

TEXT: Toole, K. Ross. *The Rape of the Great Plains,* chapters 7-8, pp. 144-176.

WHILE VIEWING

It may be confusing to follow Professor Toole's sources in this lecture. Basically, there are four: *The North Central Power Study* of 1971, which predicted 21 coal-fired generating plants in Montana; *The Montana-Wyoming Aqueduct Study* of 1972, which was written by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and specified the dams and canals that would send Montana's water to feed the giant plants; the 1974 Bureau of Reclamation study (unnamed in the lecture), which describes some of the adverse impacts of the coal-water development; and the National Academy of Sciences report (also unnamed and not dated), which suggests what groundwater contamination will follow strip mining and predicts demographic changes in the character of Montana. Dr. Toole briefly mentions a study done by Wayne VanVoast of the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, *Hydrological Effects of Strip Mining Near Decker* (June 1974).

Taking notes is supremely important because of the statistical nature of some of Dr. Toole's data. Students should also jot down their questions while viewing the lecture and remember to ask them after the videotape has played.

AFTER VIEWING

This lecture is Dr. Toole's most contemporary lecture, and yet more than a decade has passed since the studies he mentions. Many viewers may want to further research Montana's coal and water development. Possible follow-up may include inviting a state legislator to speak in the classroom, a debate between a reclamation official and a concerned activist, a talk by a Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology or Department of Natural Resources and Conservation official.

What has been the result of the moratorium on Yellowstone River water? Have continuing aquifer studies produced adequate reclamation data for the Northern Plains? What legislative initiatives have passed in recent years? These are topics for research reports.

BACKGROUND NOTES

The doctrine of prior appropriation is the backbone of Montana's water policy. Water allocations on Montana's streams and rivers are obtained by taking the water and putting it to beneficial use. The water right must be continuously used in order to stand up in court. Traditionally, water users have filed their water rights only in the county courthouses. Because Montana has 56 counties, some inconsistencies in reporting and accuracy exist.

In the face of the challenge of future industrial water use and water sales, the Montana legislature passed the Montana Water Use Act of 1973.

Legislators wanted solid data on water use patterns, not as an invasion of water users' privacy as much as to use the data to preserve these rights as demands for industrial water use inevitably increase.

Dr. Toole believed that this law breaks two historically debilitating themes. Only under intense pressure—be it population pressure or economic pressure—did previous Montana legislatures act to conserve resources. The action taken was often sudden, random, and ineffectual.

In coal-fired power plants and synfuel plants, the water used cannot be returned to its place of origin. The essence of the generating process is steam, and steam is dispersed into the atmosphere after it generates power. Water immediately exiting the plant and reintroduced into a stream would disrupt the stream because of its intense heat. In the gasification, or synthetic fuel process, water is atomized under intense pressure and is itself converted, along with "cooked coal," into gas. Some experts say these synfuel plants require even more water than generating plants.

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Governor Judge got his moratorium. He got it at once, and he got it by an overwhelming vote in both houses. Now he has the time, we all have the time, three years to try to get ready for the invasion.

No one, in the meantime, can touch this water. There will be no withdrawals, there will be no permits, and there will be no nothing. An extraordinary thing for a state legislature, especially this one, to do.

LECTURE 20

WINDS OF MONTANA: A CONCLUSION

> *We were rich in many respects. We still are. But, call it colonialism, call it exploitation, explain it any way you want; those who lived here, those who stayed here, those who put down their roots here keep very little. And those who governed here, with few exceptions indeed, did very little to help anyone else keep anything. So, though it did take quite some time, the optimism in Montana, as in the nation, did lose its resiliency. In Montana in particular, it was replaced with a kind of obdurate and cynical tenacity.*

DR. TOOLE HAS REACHED THE END of his course, a course he has taught for almost two decades as Hammond Professor of History at the University of Montana. He has introduced us to some of Montana's heroes, some of Montana's villains, and something more. Because of the concerns and personality of the historian himself, we have been introduced to the land. We have watched the visitors coming into the land, an adventurous trickle of humanity at first, and then, as the vast wealth of natural resources became known, we have watched the fortune-seeking crowds come. Dr. Toole has told us not only of the past, but its consequences, its patterns. He has taken a stance.

This history is just that—*his* story, Dr. K. Ross Toole's story of his native state. Our guide has been our storyteller and, as everyone knows, stories assume their power to the degree that they move us emotionally. But, to listen to Dr. Toole's stories of Montana is to be moved more than emotionally. In this, his final lecture, Professor Toole also asks us to become involved in Montana's future, to move ourselves in a way that will preserve the state's character, its open space, and natural beauty.

Knowledge of Montana's past, Dr. Toole is saying, is a responsibility. Once a person knows what happened, he or she can no longer accept the mistakes of the past. And there have been mistakes. The pattern was boom-and-bust, rags-to-riches with a debilitating twist: take all the resources until they are gone. Don't worry about the consequences for the land.

There is more than an imparting of knowledge, however. Dr. Toole is imparting values. He speaks for the land with that "splendid perversity" he mentioned in his very first lecture. He is speaking for the land with the "obdurate and cynical tenacity" he mentions in his conclusion. Once thought so limitless, Montana is no longer so. The land in Montana is rare. Open spaces – quality spaces – are now in demand. The land, therefore, is precious. It can no longer be considered merely the obstruction in the way of natural resources. Because of the increasing development of land elsewhere in America, Montana's value is ascending.

This is a change, a change in perception of value. Dr. Toole describes the newly-valued land as "beautiful space, clean space, quiet space, space rich in quality which Americans, having increasingly lost it elsewhere, are now seeking as they have never sought it before." Montana's traditional curse – its wide, hard-to-cross open spaces – is now Montana's blessing. To turn back to the mistakes of the past, to allow any economic interest the right to spoil what Montana has earned, is to squander our fortune, our hard-won triumph. Americans need Montana, Dr. Toole is saying. Montana is now what all of America once was. Montana, in essence, is American heritage.

Dr. Toole has stood out in the winds of Montana. He has charted the winds of Montana's past, and he has not been afraid to tell his viewers what he has found. He has told us when these winds carved deep, ugly gashes in the land and when others like himself have stood strong against their harsh gales. He is telling us now that the winds of Montana have changed.

And so, Montanans must now choose which way the wind will blow. One study Dr. Toole mentions suggests that by the year 2000, Montana will have lost not only all its natural resource wealth, but also the beauty of its land. But Dr. Toole hopes this will not come to pass. He is hopeful, he says, that Montanans will act together, "express themselves constantly and positively, very tenaciously, very aggressively, and very clearly" to preserve this new and valuable commodity that is now Montana itself.

> *The point is that these new winds, both good and evil, are blowing, and there is a stirring across the land, and there is a good chance, and I think it may be our last chance, and I think that you had better try and try terribly hard.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

With slight modifications, this is a repeat of Dr. Toole's introduction to his 20-lesson course. It is his summary; but more than that, it is his call to democratic action.

BEFORE VIEWING

After Dr. Toole's first lecture, viewers were asked to face their own preconceptions of Montana's history. Now, having heard Montana's premier historian describe his insights into the state and having read from his and other historians' works, viewers should again express *their* views. Remember that myth has played an important role in molding people's conceptions of the American West. Remember Dr. Toole's impatience with myth. And remember that Dr. Toole has taken a strong stand throughout the course. Do you agree? Where do you agree? Where do you disagree? Where do you stand? What has Montana become to you?

You can then compare your conclusions with your preconceptions. And you can discuss your insights with your fellow viewers.

WHILE VIEWING

Watching Dr. Toole's conclusion is surprising in one very important respect. Though his words ring out strong and clear as they have throughout the course, his delivery is very matter of fact. It is also consistent with his manner throughout the course. This is not a man who will convince us of his point of view with demagoguery or gesticulations. Instead, we view the seriousness of the subject in the seriousness of our guide's expressions. At the very end, almost embarrassed by the standing ovation his students give him, Dr. Toole patiently folds his notes and departs by a side door. He is leaving his words, his work. The applause is unimportant.

AFTER VIEWING

For all of us, Montana history will not end here. We are a state whose history extends well beyond its borders. We are distinct, a land whose very name has always conjured up distinct images of adventure, unspoiled beauty, and frontier spirit and hospitality. Our learning about Montana and its past will continue, and we should remain open to all the opportunities we can find to expand our knowledge. As Dr. Toole implies, we will be expanding our responsibilities as well.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Dr. K. Ross Toole delivered this, his final lecture, at the University of Montana on June 1, 1981. He died of cancer two and a half months later. Dr. Harry S. Fritz, a fellow University of Montana historian and friend, eulogized Dr. Toole this way:

> A man's life is not measured by the bits and pieces he left behind, but by the spirit in which he lived it. All his life Ross Toole was a fighter. Montana was his bottom line. He left an understanding of the state's history in his books and other writings, and it is our under-

standing, the public's understanding. No greater tribute can be paid to a historian. But we remember him also in his last fight, against cancer, which he fought without remorse and without pity. The battle bought him the time to spend one more year doing what he loved best—teaching, writing, and urging others to go on without him.

> *Maybe the only way really to see how meager a mark mankind has made on this land (in spite of smelters, pulp plants, and refineries) is to fly in a small plane, very slowly and at low altitude, over its length and breadth. Its wilderness areas are as large as some European countries—and wilderness areas aside, one can fly for mile after mile after mile and see no road, no automobile, no town, no railroad track. East of the Continental Divide it is like the sea, with the wind moving tawny grass like waves from horizon to horizon—and not a single mark of man. In the west the little geometric patterns of towns vanish if you look away for just a moment and they are swallowed up in the vast tumult of the mountains—those gigantic folds, layers, and gorges changing in the light, constantly shifting their enormity, organic, restless, and infinitely lonely. That is one way to look at the portrait of Montana. And that is one reason why Montanans feel so strongly about their land.*
>
> *Now, on an October day walk up a canyon in the Bitterroots—walk just a mile and sit down. There will be a soft rustling of aspen, there will be a soft hushing in the tops of the tall pines—and no other sound—and no man has ever sat there before.*
>
> *East or west there is that profound quietness lying just beneath the surface of the small sounds the land makes. And within 20 minutes of slow driving from any city in Montana, you are suddenly in it—and alone. It has always been there—and you feel it, that old, that primitive affinity for where you came from some limitless time ago.*
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> —From *Twentieth-Century Montana:*
> *A State of Extremes,* 1972